African Violet MAGAZINE

January • February 2016 Volume 69 Number 1

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COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMERCIAL SALES & EXHIBITS: Lynn Lombard, 790 Ridgecrest Dr., Colfax, CA 95713. For information on convention entries or sales room, contact Lynn Lombard, *Email* <lynn_lombard@worldnet.att.net>

CONVENTION AWARDS: Send suggestions to: Elmer Godeny, 3527 Windsor Ct., Mays Landing, NJ 08330. *Email* <ekgprof1@comcast.net>. Send contributions to AVSA, 2375 North St., Beaumont, TX 77702.

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FUTURE CONVENTION DATES: Albuquerque, NM. May 29 - June 5, 2016.

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OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE: AVSA Secretary, Mary Corondan, 434 Plumwood Way, Fairview, TX 75069. *Email* <mcorondan@yahoo.com>

PLANT REGISTRATION: Joe Bruns, 1220 Stratford Ln., Hanover Park, IL 60203-2667. *Email* <jbruns@qwip.net>.

RESEARCH: Send suggested projects for scientific research or names of interested, qualified, potential research personnel to Dr. Jeff Smith, 3014 W. Amherst Rd., Muncie, IN 47304.

SHOW SCHEDULE APPROVER: For information on Shows, AVSA Awards, and Approving Schedules write to: Meredith Hall, P. O. Box 370, Marlin, TX 76661. *Email* <m.hall@reagan.com>. **Do not send Show Schedules by Email - this address is for information ONLY.**

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AVM EDITOR: Ruth Rumsey, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702; 409-839-4725; FAX 409-839-4329. *Email* <rrumsey@earthlink.net>.

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TALLY TIME: Susan Anderson, 4040 E. Maldonado Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85042. *Email:* <sanderson122@cox.net>.

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On this cover:

Ace of Diamonds

Exhibited and Hybridized by:

Kent Stork

Large Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

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THE AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC. ORG. 1946

OFFICERS

Winston J. Goretsky, President
32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada T3L 2B2
email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Dr. Richard Nicholas, 1st Vice President
3113 Deerfield Dr., Denton, TX 76208
email: randanicho@aol.com

Sue Ramser, 2nd Vice President
2413 Martin, Wichita Falls, TX 76308
email: ramserwf@wf.net

Susan Anderson, 3rd Vice President
4040 E. Maldonado Dr., Phoenix AZ 85042
email: sanderson122@cox.net

Edna Rourke, Treasurer
99 Old Stratford Rd., Shelton, CT 06484
email: APapillion@aol.com

Mary Corondan, Secretary
434 Plumwood Way, McKinny, TX 75069
email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

John Carter, Immediate Past President
1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012
email: johntcarter@valornet.com

STAFF

Ruth Rumsey, Editor
2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702
email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Cindi Nofziger, Advertising Manager
1035 Lakewood Dr., Albany, OR 97321
email: ccnofziger@comcast.net

Lynne Wilson, Publications Chairman
645 Hudson Ave., Tampa, FL 33606
email: wilsonav@tampabay.rr.com

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

* * * Happy New Year * * *

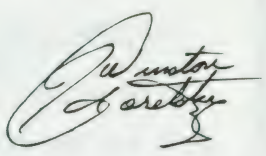
It is certainly hard to believe that another year has passed and that we are now in the year "2016." I would just like to wish you all the very best in this coming year and look forward to what we are able to accomplish with this wonderful fellowship we share through our beloved African violet.

Many plans are well under way with spring shows, and the organization of the AVSA convention in Albuquerque, NM, is no exception. By now, you may have heard the buzz about registration being open. Check out the website and download the convention package, which should provide you with all the information that you need to sign up for all the fun and activities.

I sometimes set my registration aside and then realize closer to the show that I've completely forgotten to register and book my hotel stay. All along, I've planned to go. Why not just look after it right away and know that YOU are attending. Then you can start talking to your friends and fellow club members about the fact that you ARE going. This might be just the nudge that others need to encourage them to come along as well. It's fun to start thinking about a trip in the middle of winter, when spring seems so far away. At least for me, here in Canada, where winter starts in September and ends sometime around June, I can't wait to be on a plane to somewhere I can see violets and friends, and fresh new sights. What ARE you waiting for? Christmas has come and gone! Okay, well, I do hope that I've somewhat encouraged you to sign up for convention. Don't leave it until the last minute. I hope to hear from Amy at the office, that she's run off her feet with registrations. In all honesty, convention is a great time, and I sincerely hope to see you there.

January and February can sometimes be months where we feel a bit down and not so enthusiastic. One way to pick yourself up, is to go out and do something for someone else and redirect your focus towards helping out a nearby friend or maybe a club member. Here is an idea that you might try. Put a little African Violet "care kit" together for a mobile violet clinic.

Mix up your favorite soil recipe and gather a few supplies together such as: four inch pots, starter mix for leaf cuttings, solo cups, labels, and a marker. Bring along whatever you think you might need to fix up, repot, restart, or otherwise rescue a few plants. Give your friend a call and arrange to come by for a visit. Bring along your "care kit" and surprise your friend with an afternoon or evening of "violet therapy." I get more fun out of helping someone else fix up their plants than I do working on my own. It's a great way to visit and share, and it lifts your spirits, along with that of another person. I'm SURE there's someone you know who could use a helping hand with a few of their plants. It's a fun and helpful thing to do and you'll be so glad you tried this little idea. Offer to bring a snack along and you'll be certain of an invitation.



Winston

Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Happy 2016 to everyone!

I hope you enjoyed the holidays and are ready for another year of growing African violets.

There are several very good articles in this issue. One, I really appreciate, and I think you will, too, is by **Pat Hancock**, one of our most popular hybridizers.

As I am constantly begging our members to write an article for this publication, Pat came up with a great idea to offer an incentive to our members. You'll probably want to turn to page 14 right now. Really! This is a fantastic idea, and since you obviously like African violets, you should read "*A Worthwhile Contest*" right away.

I'm hoping many of you will write an article for the AVM in 2016. Tell us how you became involved with African violets. Share your "secret" recipes and ideas for successful growing, and maybe competing in shows. Is there a topic you want to share with other members? A new soil mix, a successful idea you had to increase your plant space? A challenge you took to try growing other-sized violets than your usual and "other" Gesneriads, that you had never grown before? Did your lighting situation change? What did you do to make sure your plants received the light they needed? Consider any changes you made. Were they good for your plants? Or a lesson learned?

There are so many topics that other growers would like to read about. New successes, and, yes, failures. We're all in this together aren't we?

Again, I appeal to you to write an article, or more, for this publication; especially with the Contest as an incentive. I know the prizes will interest all.

Thanks to Pat Hancock for always coming up with good ideas, and for always looking out for this organization in the many ways she contributes; sharing knowledge, and writing such wonderful, informative articles.

Ruth

For those of you that are planning to attend the AVSA Convention and Show in Albuquerque, NM, May 29 - June 5, 2016, Registration Information should be available on the AVSA website *(www.avsa.org)* after the first of the year. If you do not have access to a computer, please call the office (844) 400-AVSA (2872) and I will mail you a packet. I am looking forward to seeing all of you there! For more information visit <http://avsa.org/conventions-2016>

Going to Your First Convention

By Candace Baldwin

You've thought about going before. You've heard club members talk about it, or you read about the tours and programs in the AVM. You've seen pictures of the award winning plants, designs, and of everyone having fun at all those events. This year you decided to take the plunge and go! Yea! Now come the questions. How do I get started? What do I do when I get there? What should I do first?

The first thing to do is check the Convention page on the AVSA website and keep checking it. This page will help keep you informed on convention-related activities as they become available. Shortly after the first of the year, AVSA will post a convention/registration packet that you will need to download, complete, and return. This packet includes details about the tours, educational programs, and other convention activities you'll see addressed in the AVM.

It will also ask if you want to enter plants or designs in the Show. I highly encourage you to do one or both. Participating at National is an amazing experience.

I know many people at their first convention shy away from the idea, saying they just want to "go and see what it's like," before becoming an Exhibitor. I felt the same way my first time, and here is my guidance: Yes, this is the *National convention*. Yes, it's bigger than your local show. Yes, you will say "I have a plant at home that looks as good; I should have entered!" So, pick one out now, set it where you'll groom it regularly, and then plan to check the box on the 2016 AVSA Convention Registration Form to enter the Horticulture Division.

No plants? The Design categories range in size from very small to very large. Choose one that interests you and give it a try.

Most importantly, be sure to register for the program: "So, it's Your First Convention." I'll be covering the different aspects of National, such as explaining the different raffle tables, reviewing the Souvenir Book, giving insider tips, and providing lots of time to answer questions. Until then, please feel free to contact me at aviolets@hotmail.com and I'll be happy to answer your questions. See you in Albuquerque!

NEW AVSA Club forming in Central Oregon

Central Oregon African Violets • Bend, Oregon

President / contact person:
Linda Ingle, 541-241-6063 or 831-594-8600.

Please contact Linda for meeting dates, times, and places.

Photo Credit: **Winston Gorets**

Marsnail's Purrty Pooka

Exhibited & Hybridized by: *Sharon Vantuyl*

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Primulina species USBRG

Exhibited by: *Ron Davidson*

"And the winners are ..."

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 7506

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Harbor Blue, EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia, Dumplin'; Best in Show/Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5g clone *pendula*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Madeline Taube.** Best Standard: Silent Prayer; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Doug Allen.** Best Miniature: Rob's Chilly Willy, **Oriana Harrison.**

BURBANK AVS, MONTROSE AVS, AV COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Kitten Caboodle, Gum Drop, Jolly Maiden; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Kitten Caboodle; Best Trailer: Rob's Wagga Wagga; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Gay Wilson.** Best Standard: Ness' Candy Pink; Best Species: *Saintpaulia rupicola*, **Barbara Burde.** Best Miniature: Planet Kid, **Bernadine Poulsen.** Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Deep Purple Dreaming', **Joan Wood.** Best Design, **Leonard Re.**

CEDAR VALLEY AVC, IOWA – Winners: Cajun's Hot Expectations, Cajun's Storm Watch, Muffy; Best Standard: Cajun's Hot Expectations; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus 'Harlequin Lace'*, **Ginny Platte.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Woolomooloo, Linda Darnel, Cirelda; Best Trailer: Cirelda, **Elaine Schnell.** Best in Show/Best Miniature: Rob's June Bug; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Fire, **Jan Tyler-Blanchard.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha*, **Barbara Pershing.** Best Design, **Carol Tjaden.**

CINCINNATI AND DAYTON AVS, OH – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Celina Dark Velvet, Rob's Dust Storm, Rob's Zipper Zapper; Best Miniature: Ballet Blueberry Ice, **Debbie McInnis.** Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia rupicola*, *Saintpaulia* 8 clone Cha Simba, *Saintpaulia* 5f clone *orbicularis*; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5f clone *orbicularis*, **Kare Cenci.** Best in Show/Best Standard: Re Lion, **Linda Lloyd.** Best Semiminiatur Ness' Crinkle Blue, **Pat Hancock.** Be Trailer: Milky Way Trail, **Pat Gibso** Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Moonlig Valley', **Penny Wichman.** Best Desig Design Sweepstakes, **Mel Grice.** Hor culture Sweepstakes, **Al Cenci.**

NORTH STAR AV COUNCIL, MN – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Lyon Magic Charms, Apache Freedom, Sheer Romanc Best Species: *Saintpaulia tongwensis* #339 Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barba Werness.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collectio Glitter Surprise, Moon Child, Ian-Minuet; Be Semiminiature: Jolly Jaden; Horticulture Swee stakes, **Gail Podany.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Co lection: Texas Space Dust, Precious Red, Dolore Sugar Candy; Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Patric Kono.** Best in Show/Best Standard: Rebel's Ic Kake; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Vers **Carol Semrau.** Best Miniature: Frosted Denir **Mary Endrizzi.**

OHIO STATE AVS, OH – Winners: Be AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranber Sparkler, Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion, Jersey Sno Flakes; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckey Cranberry Sparkler, **Linda Lloyd.** 2nd Best AVS Standard Collection: Cajun's Beautiful Oblivio Buckeye Nostalgia, Buckeye Seductress; Be AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Shy Blue, Jolly Dea Thunder Surprise; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Dea Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Martin.** Be Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tong wensis* Uppsala 3397, *Saintpaulia* 5c2 clon *diplotricha* Parker, *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *iona tha*; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tong wensis* Uppsala 3397, **Al Cenci.** 2nd Best Speci Collection: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone Kacharoro *Saintpaulia teitensis*, *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clon *ionantha*, **Brenda Petry.** Best Miniature: Froste

Denim, **Marge Farrand.** Best Trailer: Cajun's McKenna Trail, **Pat Berilla.** Best Gesneriad: *Nautilocalyx pemphidius*; Design Sweepstakes, **Mel Grice.** Best Design, **Karyn Cichocki.**

SOUTH COAST AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Marshlands, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Nostalgia; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Thunder Surprise, Tiptop, Jolly Coral; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Tiptop; Best Standard: Carolina Elegant Affair; Best Miniature: Precious Red; Best Trailer: Broadway Star Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Leonard Re.** Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia bullata*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Jacquie Eisenhut.**

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Kathy Hajner – Peralta, NM

'K's Lilac Infusion' (10794) 09/08/2015 (K. Hajner) Single-semidouble white frilled large pansy/pale lavender and light blue fantasy streaks. **Variegated** medium green and white, ovate, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

'K's Merrylegs' (10795) 09/08/2015 (K. Hajner) Single-semidouble white frilled pansy. **Variegated** medium green and white, serrated. **Miniature**

'K's Pistachio Blush' (10796) 09/08/2015 (K. Hajner) Single-semidouble white frilled bell/pink eye, variable dark pink markings; green edge. **Variegated** medium green and white, quilted. **Small standard**

'K's Sage Wand' (10797) 09/08/2015 (K. Hajner) Single-semidouble medium blue two-tone ruffled pansy/variable green on upper petals. **Variegated** medium green, white and pink, heart-shaped, quilted, wavy, serrated. **Standard**

'K's Tipsy Spritzer' (10798) 09/08/2015 (K. Hajner) Single-semidouble lavender two-tone pansy/darker band, thin green edge. **Variegated** dark green, white and pink, pointed, quilted, wavy, serrated/red back. **Standard**

*****

Cheryl Major – Westford, MA

'Althea's Legacy' (10799) 09/29/2015 (C. Major) Semidouble-double pink fluted pansy/dark pink eye. Medium green, plain, pointed, quilted. **Semiminiature**

*****

Pat Hancock – Middletown, OH

'Buckeye Torch Song' (10800) 09/30/2015 (P. Hancock) Single-semidouble pink pansy/variable mauve markings. **Variegated** dark green, cream and pink, plain, glossy. **Standard**

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsk**

Mac's Southern Springtime

Exhibited by: *Penny Kerker-Smith*

Hybridized by: *G. MacDonald*

Semiminiature

Cajun's Alfie

Exhibited by:
Brenda Conner
Hybridized by:
B. Thibodeaux
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Candy Fountain

Exhibited by:
Lynn Canning
Hybridized by: *I. Fredette*
Standard Trailer

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Keeping it Reasonable!

By Brett Flewelling

Like many beginning gesneriad enthusiasts, when I first started growing, I collected many different types without paying much attention to the number of plants that I was actually accumulating. It became a case of too much, too soon. As the plants grew and became crowded, and I became more experienced, I soon realized that I couldn't keep everything. I was running out of time and room.

What is one to do in such a case? Here are three tips that I have learned along the way.

First, when culling, look at how close together your plants are. Plants need room to grow properly. I make sure that my plants do not touch each other. I am able to turn them completely around without them snagging on another plant. I find that foliage lies flat and plants grow to their potential. If your shelf is full, do not try to fit another plant. When purchasing a plant, think about how big it will actually get. If you don't have room, don't get it! Keep in mind that you need plenty of room for routine maintenance, such as grooming and watering. Space around each plant makes it much easier for routine care.

Next, look at how many duplicates of a plant you have. I only grow a maximum of two plants per variety or species. Notice that I said maximum. Most things I only grow one of, unless it is an outstanding show plant or personal favorite. You don't have room to grow eight things of everything. Some people may argue: well, what if it dies? Let's be honest, are you going to look after that many properly? Be ruthless! Give the extras away or donate them to your club!

Also, look at what grows well in your conditions. Nobody wants to look at a half-dead, ratty-looking plant. I usually give plants a year to shape up, or ship out. Some may grow slowly, but they need to look healthy. If not, compost! Don't just look at the bloom; look at the entire plant. Many times we get caught up with how pretty a bloom is, but the plant itself may be a dog!

One tip that I learned from an orchid grower which could definitely be applied to gesneriads; is to purchase one variety or species from several different genera. You will see what will and what won't grow in your house.

It is hard to part with some plants at first, but you will find your collection to be much more manageable. As a result, you will be able to sit back and admire your plants instead of their care becoming another chore. Rediscover the joy that the hobby brings to us all, and keep it reasonable!

From the *Toronto Gesneriad Society Newsletter*

GROWING TIPS

By Wayne Tomczyk

When I was a child, my Mother would often make chicken, in some form, on the weekends. My father's favorite question as we gathered at the dinner table was, "We're having chicken, do you wanna neck?" I was too young to see the humor in that joke, and now that I am growing African violets, I see that necks on African violets are no joke, either! A few weeks ago, I noticed that my violet collection was not looking very well. Leggy plants, dead leaves, and above all, many necks. So I decided to repot almost my entire collection. Over a three day period, I repotted somewhere between 25 and 35 plants... and I am so glad that I did! Getting rid of the necks, disbudding, removing rows of leaves, and giving my plants a new soil transfusion resulted in some very promising plants. The whole process forced me to take a close look at each of my individual plants. Although I have to admit that a few of my plants were added to the compost pile, the remaining ones have been revitalized. I am pretty sure that I will have some interesting plants by the time the spring show rolls around.

Take a look at your plants.

From The Desert Blooms, publication of the *Tucson AVS*

Shows and Judges

Bill Foster, Shows and Judges Committee

3610 Gray Drive • Mesquite, TX 75150
Email: 1bpfoster@sbcglobal.net

Hopefully, everyone has enjoyed a great holiday season and are now getting busy working on their plants for spring shows and the convention in Albuquerque. All the information will be available on the AVSA website January 1st. The last issue of the *African Violet Magazine* listed varieties that have special awards. If you have any of those varieties, work on them for convention. Win, and you will have extra money to add new varieties to your collection.

Be sure to send in registrations early. Review the dates you can sign up for design entries. Postpone this chore, and you may miss out on the opportunity to win, a design award. Review deadlines for serving as Judges or Clerks. Some of you who are student judges or AVSA members should sign up to help clerk. This gives you an opportunity to observe, and be a part of judging a convention show. We are always short on clerks and have to try to recruit more at the last minute.

The electronic Handbook should be available soon. We now have the Judges list on a program where it can be updated more often than a couple of times a year.

Judith Carter, Oklahoma, was somehow omitted from the list of Master Judges in the last column. Congratulations, Judy.

Be sure to notice that a new collection has been added to the convention schedule. It is a collection for the Cajun's series and will include standards, minis, and semis. The Russian collection will now include minis and semis.

I look forward to seeing you in Albuquerque. It is a great place!

BOYCE EDENS RESEARCH FUND

Marlene Buck • 17235 N. 106th Avenue • Sun City, AZ 85373-1958
Donations received from August 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015 • Total: $125.00

Multicolor
Pam & Bob Huey, Mobile AL
In Memory of Mrs. Doris Thomas

Two-Tone
Cross Town African Violet Club,
Madison, WI

Thumbprint
Sherin Boyd, Saint John NB, Canada
JoAnne D'Angelo, Phoenix, AZ
Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN
Barbara D. Taswell-Miller, Olathe, KS

A Worthwhile Contest

By Pat Hancock

How would you like to have a total of thirty-two (yes, 32), New Introduction leaves to share with friends, your club, or just to enjoy for yourself?

In every issue of our *African Violet Magazine*, there is a plea from the Editor, Ruth Rumsey, for members to write original articles to make the magazine more enjoyable for our members.

Sadly, with each issue, she must come up with reprints or articles from other newsletters or publications in order to fill the space.

Are we all just too busy, too lazy, or perhaps just too indifferent, that we cannot take the time to write an original article about some part of our African violet or Gesneriad experience that others would enjoy reading about?

With other Commercial members and hybridizers, I have put together a contest with the hope that these great Prize Packages will excite our members to write original articles and submit them to our AVM Editor.

The Winner of the contest will be announced at the 2017 AVSA Convention in Orlando, Florida. It is not necessary to be present to win.

The **3rd Place Winner** will receive a total of **eight** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **2nd Place Winner** will receive a total of **sixteen** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **1st Place Winner** will receive a total of **thirty-two** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

Five experienced African violet growers, and writers, have agreed to judge the entries: ***Laurel Goretsky, Bill Price, Anne Nicholas, Sue Hoffmann,*** and ***Mel Grice***.

The **Contest Rules** are as follows:

1. ALL entered articles must be Original Work, and cannot have been published before.
2. You may write as many as you wish, and eac entry must be marked, **CONTEST.**
3. **Submissions must be received AFTE March 1, 2016.**
4. **Cutoff date for entries is April 1, 201 Articles received after this date will not b considered.**
5. Hybridizers, Commercial Members, and Judges taking part, are not eligible to receive prizes.
6. The decisions of the Judges will be FINAL.
7. Due to the high cost of shipping leaves internationally, leaves will only be shipped to winners in the US. International members will be required to pick them up at the 201 Orlando Convention.

Our AVSA Commercial Members and Hybridizers who have pledged to take part in awarding the prizes are as follows:

1. **Buckeye Violets**, Pat Hancock: Buckeye & Jitter Bug African Violets.
2. **Paula's African Violets**, Paula Bal
3. **Stars n Streps**, Steve and Donna Turner: Russian AVs, & Streps
4. **Dale's Streptocarpus**: Dale Martens
5. **Fancy Bloomers, "Donna's" African Violets**: Donna Brining
6. **Lyndon Lyon's African Violets:** Paul Sorano
7. **Dmitry Ozherelyev:** Russian & Ukraine African Violets
8. **BJ Ohme:** *Streptocarpus* Hybrids & Cajun's African Violets
9. **Ron and Jan Davidson:** Jolly Series African Violets

Think about it! How great would it be to be the recipient of 32 New Introductions, or 16, or 8 from nine of our Commercial Members and Hybridizers?

Every year at the AVSA Convention, we all line up when the doors are about to open to have a chance to get the Newest and Best African violets!

Winning this contest would mean that you would have these New Introduction before anyone else can buy them.

So, take the time to write an article for the AVM, and be in the running for these great prizes.

It's a "win/win" situation. Our magazine will be more interesting with new, original articles, and you will be eligible to win.

Write about anything relating to our hobby: African violets, Gesneriads, Designing, and so on.

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS

Thumbprint (Under $25)

Two-tone ($25-$49)

Multicolor ($50-$99)

Geneva ($100-$499)

Fantasy ($500-$999)

Chimera (Over-$1000)

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

RD's Illusion

Exhibited by: *Laurel Brown*

Hbridized by: *R.& D. Townsend*

Standard

Definition of Chimeras

By Dr. Jeff Smith

A chimera is a plant that has two or more distinct genetic cell lines. The mesophyll tissue (middle of the leaf) is of one genetic type and the epidermis (skin tissue) is of another. In this particular case, the flower color genes are different between the mesophyll and epidermal tissues and each tissue produces a different flower color pigment. Since the flowers are made from both mesophyll and epidermis tissues, the flowers will be striped or pinwheeled as both tissue types show up. The usual chimera has a center strip of one color and outer petal strips of another. The stripes can also carry the fantasy trait, and show spots.

Chimeras happen by accident. They cannot be planned, or made by hybridization. They are sports/mutations. Since they usually originate from man-hybridized plants, they would be considered a cultivar. Because leaf cuttings are produced from only the epidermal cells, chimeras won't come true from leaf cuttings (the babies don't get the mesophyll tissue).

You can hybridize on chimeras, but the striped flower trait won't be passed on genetically. I have heard some hybridizers claim, however, that using a chimera as a parent is more likely to produce a few chimera seedlings, but I've seen little proof to this claim. If you cross onto a chimera plant, the seedlings will likely receive their genetic material from the mesophyll tissue layer only and will show the genetic inheritance of that layer or flower color.

Chimeras can be only reproduced from buds which have both layers of tissue. Suckers can be grown up and rooted (as axillary buds on the leaves) or bloom stalks can be rooted (which have buds at the base of the leafy bracts).

These are the only ways to propagate a chimera true to type.

Growing Schedule for Show

By Richard Nicholas

Time Scale	Task
20 weeks	Repot Minis (hard break)
16 weeks	Repot Standards
12 weeks	Repot Minis (soft break)
10 weeks	Begin bloom booster (if desired)
3-10 weeks	Last disbudding
6 weeks	Stop disbudding
4 weeks	Major grooming
1 week	Grooming
Showtime	Enter Show Plants

Definitions/Explanations:

Hard Break: refers to a more severe break back of the plant when repotting. Usually the hard break means that only two "triangles" of leaves remain.

Soft Break: This repotting is intended to provide fresh soil but does not remove many leaves - just removing damaged leaves or grooming for the triangle of leaves to ensure symmetry as the plant continues to grow out.

Disbud: Removing all bloom/bud stems from the time of repotting until the established date to end disbudding. The most common time frame fo stopping disbudding is 7-8 weeks before show leaving time for the plant to come back to fu bloom in time for show. Of course, a grower ma know that some varieties come back quickly or ar slower to come back (like some heavily variegate varieties) and adjust the timing accordingly.

Major Grooming: at this four week point mos plants are coming back into bud. The major groom ing is the time to remove any extra leaves and, es pecially, to bring bud stems up between leaves an push leaves down into place.

Bloom Booster: If you choose to "boost bloom use a high phosphorous (middle number) fertiliz during this time period. Standards generally re spond better than the little ones. Starting ten week before show is necessary for the phosphorous t have an impact. Stopping on time can prevent th yellowing which can occur if a plant stays too lon on a lower nitrogen/high phosphorous fertilizer.

From the Lone Star AV Council Newslett

A Family Portrait

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, OH
Email: <melsgrice@earthlink.net

Nautilocalyx (naw till o KAY lix) is a gesneriad genus collected in Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. The name refers to the bracts that enfold the flowers, which are thought to resemble the shell of the nautilus. *Nautilocalyx* are terrestrial perennial herbs that grow in shady, wet places and on rocks in forests. These tender plants are grown for their showy foliage and small, tubular flowers borne close to the stems.

Nautilocalyx pictus has glossy medium green, lance-shaped leaves borne in opposite pairs on fleshy stems. There is a lighter green area along the midrib of each leaf. *Nautilocalyx pictus* 'Jade' has glossy olive green, lance-shaped leaves with a larger brown-colored area along the midrib of each leaf. Tubular, five-lobed off-white flowers appear in small clusters at the axils (where the bases of the leaves meet the stems). The ephemeral flowers do not last more than a day, which makes it a challenge to show in a class for blooming plants. Usually these plants are shown in a class for plants grown for ornamental qualities other than bloom since the leaves are quite ornamental in both cases.

Nautilocalyx pictus and Nautilocalyx pictus 'Jade'. Article and Photo By Mel Grice

Nautilocalyx pictus and Nautilocalyx pictus 'Jade' prefer bright, filtered light and warm, humid conditions. Grow them in light, fertile, well-drained soilless potting mix. Keep soil evenly moist during the growing season. I wick water these plants, which are grown in my basic AV mix that is almost half perlite. They grow under a tall dome near the end of a two-foot long, two tube T-12 fixture. The light stand sits in front of an east-facing window shaded by blinds so it does receive some natural light as well as fluorescent light. *Nautilocalyx pictus* and *Nautilocalyx pictus* 'Jade' can be grown single or multi-crowned. Nancy Kast of San Antonio, FL, exhibited the two plants shown in the photo at the Northeast Regional Gesneriad Society Convention this October.

A single stem of *Nautilocalyx pictus* or *Nautilocalyx pictus* 'Jade' (think AV crown cutting) will easily root and grow in a small 2-1/2 inch pot kept covered by a dome or plastic bag to maintain high humidity. Several cuttings (4 to 5) placed in a larger (4 to 5 inch) azalea pot or bulb pan will result in a show plant that you will be proud of. A single leaf of either *Nautilocalyx* will root just like an African violet and produce new plants. This method of propagation takes a little longer than rooting crown cuttings.

I highly recommend *Nautilocalyx pictus* and *Nautilocalyx pictus* 'Jade' as rewarding plants to add to your collection.

In Memory

Irwin Wagman, 80, passed away November 28, 2015 after a long battle with cancer. He is survived his by loving wife, Fayanne, six sons, one daughter, and eight grandchildren.

Born in Queens, NY, Irwin received a BS in Engineering from the University of Rochester, and a Master's degree from the University of Michigan. He had a thirty-year career at the Xerox Corporation, and was a respected Boy Scouts of America, Scout Master for many years. After retiring, he loved traveling with his family and enjoyed his involvement with computer and horticulture organizations. Irwin was also active in various service organizations, and was also a very popular attendee at the AVSA conventions. Irwin will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.

In Hot Water

By Laurene Jones

Why do they always tell you to use hot water for spraying or misting your plants? It would be so much easier to mix up a larger amount and keep it ready for use. There really is a very good reason and we'll go back to Chemistry to find it.

Water is a liquid at room temperature and it can also evaporate to a gas at room temperature. A molecule of liquid water is chemically the same as a molecule of water vapor but they are not the same physically. The gas molecule is moving faster so it has more energy than a liquid molecule of the same temperature. To evaporate from the surface of the liquid, a molecule has to absorb enough energy to break loose. That energy has to come from somewhere and its source is the rest of the body of water the gas came from. If it comes from a glass, the number of molecules that are available to evaporate compared to the number left behind is smaller and the temperature drop from the evaporation is negligible. If it comes from a tiny droplet, a larger number of the molecules are at the surface so the number evaporating is large and the temperature loss is significant. When you spray a solution over your plants it is many degrees cooler before it hits the plant. If you mist plant with hot water, it will be room temperature before it hits the plant.

That's why you must follow the directions.

AVSA BOOSTER FUND

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Donations received September 1, 2015 to October 31, 2015

Geneva

Jeri Anderson, Tucson, Ariz

Ohio State African Violet Society

Multicolor

Spring Branch African Violet Club, TX

In memory of Olivia Pieper of Brenham, TX

Two-tone

Bergen County African Violet Society

In memory of Robert Rusch, husband of Lois Rusch

Barbara D. Taswell-Miller, Olathe, KS

Thumbprint

Nancy Frost, Ocala, FL

Gail Podany, Minnetonka, NJ

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Donna Williams, Missouri City, TX

Donna and Johnny Williams, Missouri City, TX

In memory of Olivia Pieper, mother of Ruth Goeke

TOTAL: $485.0

ADVENTURES IN LIGHTING...
NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART, OR THE CLUMSY OF HAND

By Sandi Mynatt

This being my first experience with florescent lights for my African violets, which have been growing in window light so far; one could reasonably expect a few glitches, right?

My wonderful AV Angel (otherwise known as the best AV enabler this side of the Rockies) gave me two florescent light fixtures to get me started. I decided to put them under the bottom shelf of two different sets of existing wire shelf units. That way I could use a tray on the floor and gain a whole new shelf. Sounds like a great idea, doesn't it? I was proud of my efficiency and needed the extra space for the new plants I purchased at the recent show.

The first one was somewhat of a challenge, due to the fact the fixtures are 48" long and my shelves are only 36", but with the help of long zip ties I was able to get it mounted successfully. (It only looks rigged if you inspect it from a distance closer than the end of my driveway.)

I put a tray on the floor, filled it with plants, measured the distance between foliage and bulbs...only 8"; probably too close. I decided to deal with that issue later. The cockatoos that share the same room with my violets didn't really care either way.

Undaunted, I attacked the second fixture, which was larger and heavier than the first. After struggling with the spacing (this one had to stick out a foot on one end due to the bird cage next to it), I carefully measured where the slots on top of the fixture would line up with my wire shelf. I threaded one of the little s-hooks into the fixture's slot and hung it up.

So far, so good. When I started to hang the other s-hook, it slipped out of my fingers and fell INTO the inside of the fixture. I did not have another one. After reviewing all my options, I reluctantly unscrewed the end cap off the fixture to retrieve it and found two other s-hooks rattling around loose inside! Apparently, I wasn't the only one who dropped them in.

I congratulated myself on a successful rescue and now had extra hooks as a bonus! I had trouble getting the socket to stay in place as I put the end cap back on. Only three or four tries, and it was "semi-securely" back in position.

I then spent forty-five minutes (give or take an hour) trying to get that uncooperative bulb to stay in and light up.

Picture this, the fixture is hanging under a wire shelf, 15" off the floor, already secured, and can't be taken off without a LOT of trouble and I can't get the silly bulb in.

As I am lying on my back on the floor, holding one end of the bulb up with my foot, trying to maneuver the other end into the socket with my hands, I think to myself, "*Is this really worth it*?" About that time my finger hit some unknown point and ZAP! My finger flew back in pain and then went numb, I had been jolted by 120 volts of electricity! Fortunately, I was already lying on the ground, and falling was not an issue. I am not normally given to expletives, particularly within hearing distance of the parrots, but I made an exception in this case.

I took a little break before reassuring myself that I *was* smarter than the light, and I *would* get it to work. No quitter, I. Upon closer examination, I discovered that one of the light bulb prongs was bent, preventing it from making contact, while blocking the bulb from fitting in properly.

I gently straightened the prong and managed to maneuver it in. The troublesome thing would not light up unless I manually held it up into the socket.

So, I was forced to do what any good workman would do. I got out the duct tape and taped that sucker up into position where it is shining brightly at this very moment. I just love it when I win...

Technically Speaking...or Not

By Neil Lipson

Phone: (610) 356-6183
Email: ndlipson@gmail.com

Is your soil the same all across the country? NO, it's not! Here's what's happening, and what to do about it.

This article will discuss how to EASILY adjust your soil pH and the "surge" of fertilizer that some soils release when you first repot. The emphasis will be in taking the pressure off of the grower when they repot and to minimize the problems that occur when this happens.

On a trip for a presentation to the Ocala FL, club I decided to bring my pH meter. Sharon Gartner, president of the Jacksonville FL, club sent me some soil samples for testing a few weeks earlier, and when I tested the Miracle Gro African Violet soil, the pH was VERY different from the bag I had in my growing room. I posted this surprising revelation on one of the social media sites, and everyone who posted replies had a different pH. How strange.

These differences immediately told me that while it is a great soil, there are possibly pH quality control differences from one state to another.

The pH ranged from 5.1 to 6.4. I was working on titrating the pH with Carolee Carter and found that dolomite powder was much better than dolomite granules. With the powder, the pH was about 6.1 and rose only slightly over the next two months to about 6.5. With the granules, it took about a month for the granules to begin to break down. When it did, it played havoc with the soil pH with an instant big surge, which tempted the fate of a culture break every time you repotted. This was just plain unacceptable, ESPECIALLY for the growing-to-show type of grower.

MG African Violet Mix

Because the same soil sold across the country had different pH values, it was impossible to tell the growers exactly how much dolomite powder to add to get it in the 6.3 to 6.7 range. My favorite soil, Miracle Gro African Violet (MG-AV) soil, purchased at Home Depot was mixed for my TOP WATERED plants at 60 ounces (7.5 cups) of soil with 20 ounces of Hoffman's perlite. The ratio was 3:1. The pH of that mix was about 5.1. The reason I use Hoffman's perlite is that it is fertilizer free, unlike some of the other perlite formulations out there. I decided to run two experiments and here are the results:

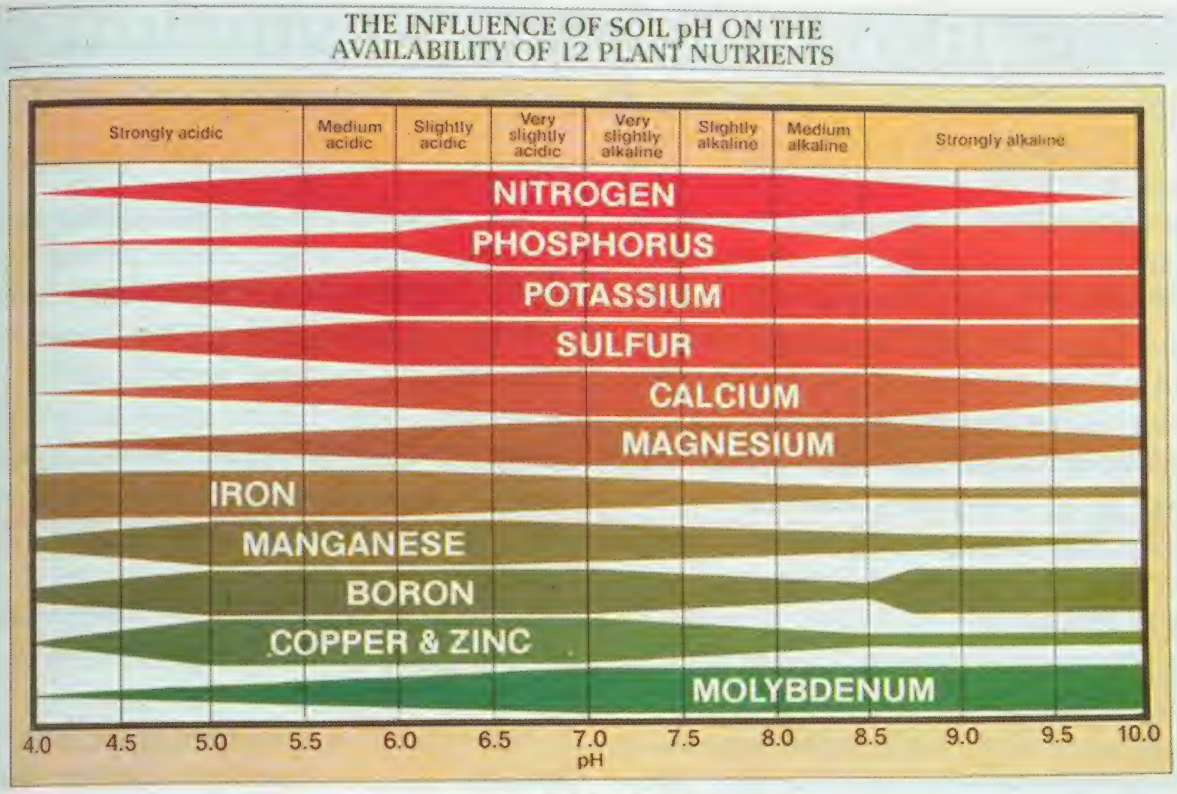
Experiment Number One

I tried this mix by first adding 2 heaping teaspoons of dolomite granules and 2 heaping teaspoons of dolomite powder to a total of 8 ounces of the 75/25 mix of soil to perlite. The pH of this mix started at 5.7 and gradually moved up to 6.6 in a two-month period. I didn't like the large change in pH over time.

Experiment Number Two

The second experiment was with the same 75/25 mix, but this time I added 4 heaping teaspoons of ONLY dolomite powder and no dolomite granules. This resulted in an initial pH of 6.2 that gradually moved up to about 6.6. This allowed the mix to become stable enough for repotting from start to finish. It stayed in this pH range for over 3 months in the testing that I did.

I've heard complaints about soil all day long. Tight centers, root rot, pH inconsistencies, you name it. To further complicate the soil-decision process, one soil may be great for one part of the country but terrible for another because of humidity and temperature differences. What does a serious grower do in this situation? First, I suggest that you check with other African violet growers in your area to see what soil they are using and use that as your starting point. Second, a serious grower



soil_ph_chart

should invest in a pH meter such as the Eco-Tstr pH1 (sold on Amazon for about $49 with free shipping). With the huge variations in pH across the country, this will absolutely affect the way your violets grow and how well they will work with the fertilizers you use. Remember, that fertilizer lockup (which occurs when the pH is too high or too low) will occur if you do not try to keep your pH in a certain range. Look at the pH chart below.

Organic Premiun

With another soil, Organic Mechanics Premium mix, I was getting phone calls telling me that the mix was giving their plants tight centers, even with a 50/50 soil/perlite mix. I was advised by a few people to NOT use the Organic Mechanics "Container Blend" and stick with the "Premium Blend." There was speculation that there was too much of either the N-P-K or one of the micronutrients in the Premium Mix. I know that this particular soil uses worm castings, so I called the company, and they could not explain why it was affecting the violets this way.

I decided to do some digging, and while I didn't find out what exactly was causing the problem, I found a cure: diluting the soil. I spoke to Pat Hancock, and she recommended a product called Miracle Gro "Expand 'N Grow" on a one-to-one basis, one part soil and one part Expand 'N Gro, and then adding enough perlite depending on whether you wick, top, or mat water. Now, at this writing, it is available and being sold, but I discovered that, technically, the product has been discontinued. What to do? It is still available on Amazon and ebay, but there are other products similar to it. In analyzing the product, it appears that the main ingredient is coconut coir, and it must be soaked in warm water to expand it. There are numerous other coconut coir products out there which should function the same way. Because coconut coir holds more water, you will need to possibly add some more perlite to the mix, depending on other factors like the humidity, the type of wick or mat, etc. Most growers will automatically make these adjustments.

Expand N Grow

Now, keep in mind that if the soil is too rich, –regardless of whether it is Organic Mechanic Premium Blend or another brand, the coconut coir may solve the problem if you begin to notice tight centers with the mix you are currently using.

One very important point to make is that you want to avoid having to go through this procedure: some growers will correct this "spike" of excess fertilizer by "timing" the soil, which means skipping the use of fertilizer for a few weeks. This can be tricky, if not impossible. The reason you need to understand this is if you start to add fertilizer at around one month after you repot, you might be too early, or too late, and then you will get a noticeable culture break where one fertilizer stops and another starts. Trust me, this is one headache you don't need coupled with figuring out which fertilizer to use for which plant over time.

Growing these beautiful plants is enough of a pain without adding more variables into your growing routine.

In all the research for this article I found complexities that to my knowledge were NOT discussed before, that made the discovery end of soil analysis push the envelope harder than I have had with previous African violet growing tips and techniques. However, as you "fine tune" your growing without having to add a lot of extra time, you will have better plants with the same amount of work you have now.

Conclusion

Test the soil pH in your potting mix container every few weeks to see what is actually happening. The pH can drift up or down, and you need to try to keep it in the 6.2 to 6.8 range Once you see it is stable, then test once a month either by gently pushing the probe into moist soil or even test the run off water. If you test the water, use plain distilled water that one time for accurate results. Also, pay close attention to the pH chart with this article.

I would like to thank Carolee Carter for technical help, soil and pH testing, as well as proofing this article.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-618 after1pm Eastern time. He will return your call

Benefits of Cinnamon on Plants

From the Lone Star AV Council Newsletter

http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/info/using-cinnamon-on-plants.htm

Cinnamon for pests

If you have a problem with ants in your home or greenhouse, cinnamon is a good deterrent. Ants don't like to walk where cinnamon powder lays, so summer ant problems will be decreased.

Use cinnamon for pests inside and outside your house. Find their entryway and sprinkle cinnamon powder in the path. Cinnamon won't kill the ants in your home, but it will help to keep them from coming inside. If you have a problem with ants in your child's sandbox, mix a container of cinnamon powder with the sand, mixing it well. Ants will steer clear of the sand.

Cinnamon as rooting agent

Cinnamon as a rooting agent is as useful as willow water or hormone rooting powder. A single application to the stem when you plant the cutting will stimulate root growth in almost every plant variety.

Give your cuttings a quick start with the help of cinnamon powder. Pour a spoonful onto a paper towel and roll damp stem ends in the cinnamon. Plant the stems in fresh potting soil. The cinnamon will encourage the stem to produce more stems while helping to keep away the fungus that causes damping-off disease.

Cinnamon for fungus control

Take advantage of cinnamon fungicide control by making a cinnamon spray for plants. Stir some cinnamon into warm water and allow it to steep overnight. Strain the liquid through a coffee filter and put the results into a spray bottle. Spray the stems and leave of affected plants, and mist the potting soil in plants that have a mushroom problem.

Growing Gesneriads From Seed

By Sue Hodges

When growing from seed, I fill a take-away container with violet mix (one that doesn't contain fertilizer) and I zap it in the microwave for a minute, stir and zap for a further minute, and then let it cool. Be careful, as there will be lots of steam. This is to prevent fungus. Fill a small, shallow pot with the cooled mix, water well, and let drain. For very fine seed you can add a layer of vermiculite or chopped sphagnum moss before watering if you wish.

Most gesneriad seed is very fine, so handle it carefully! Sprinkle the seed on the surface of the mix. Do not cover, as it needs light to germinate. As the mix was moist when you planted the seed, it will not need further watering. Put the pot in a covered container, terrarium, or zip-lock bag and place in a warm, bright position or under lights. Direct sun is not necessary. Check regularly for moisture and tiny green specks! Germination times vary and will depend on the time of year and on your conditions. Some seeds germinate in as little as seven to fourteen days while others take much longer. Spring is an ideal planting time.

When the seedlings have germinated, gradually open the container to harden them off. Diluted African violet fertilizer can now be used. Seedlings are best pricked out as soon as they are large enough to handle. Plants left too long in the seed pot may be difficult to separate without damage. I often prick out small seedlings into community pots and pot on into individual pots as the plants grow.

Sinningia are easy to grow, and many will grow outdoors all year round. *Streptocarpus* seed will often give an interesting variety of colored blooms and are fine in natural light on a windowsill. *Gesneria*, *Diastema,* and mini Sinningias are small growers if space is limited. *Columnea, Codonanthe,* and *Nematanthus* have larger seeds that may be easier to handle and will give you trailing, basket plants. *Primulina tamiana* is reputed to be the easiest gesneriad to grow, is only small, and likes the same conditions as a violet.

Species plants will come true from seed, but hybrids will vary according to the parentage. Waiting for a bud to open on a new plant grown from seed can be very exciting. Why not see what you can produce? Maybe it will be something extra special!

From *The African Violet, Publication of the AV Association of Australia*

Happy New Year!

AVSA 2016 Convention and Show
'Violets Color the Land of Enchantment'
Albuquerque, NM
Sunday, May 29 – Sunday, June 5, 2016

In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy
Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

One of the newer Optimara series is the myViolet or MyViolet plants. Examples are 'MyLove', 'MyJoy' and 'MyDream.' Introduced in 2010, these plants are characterized by a dark eye surrounded by white petal tips. The width of white band is very large, especially compared to the white edges produced by the much older Geneva edge trait. Up to 50% of the total petal area can be white depending on the specific cultivar. Those with star-shaped flowers have wider white edges than cultivars with pansy-shaped flowers. While asexual reproduction of the Optimara plants is protected by patents, sexual reproduction is not protected. Hybridizers may use these plants in their crosses. Since it takes about a year from pollination to blooming plant, hybrids with the myViolet series are just starting to reach blooming size. The results of some of these hybrids have some very interesting promise as discussed in the following questions.

Q: I'm evaluating some seedlings from a cross of Optimara 'MyJoy' with 'Ness' Blueberry Puff'. Many of the seedlings have the wide white edge of 'MyJoy', and I believe I'm getting a few with fantasy puffs in the colored eye. Can you explain the genetics of these results?

My Joy

A: Further correspondence with the hybridizer showed that most, if not all, of the seedlings (not all have bloomed yet) have the wide white edge of 'MyJoy'. Interestingly, the width of the white edge is identical to the Optimara parent. I would interpret this result to mean that the wide white edge is a genetic dominant trait that will be produced in the majority, if not all, of the seedlings. Geneva white edges are a dominant trait but show a dose affect. One dose of the gene gives a narrow white band while the homozygous or double dose of the gene gives a wider white edge. The white edges of 'MyJoy' do not appear to have a dose effect. One copy of the gene appears to give the trait in full measure. This will make producing other plants with the wide white edge very easy. Those who have used my list of genetic traits in the past can add the wide white edges of the myViolet series as a genetic dominant on the list.

Fantasy markings usually follow a genetic dominant inheritance pattern. The puff fantasy of 'Ness' Blueberry Puff 'would be dominant to the solid color in the eye of 'MyJoy'. At least half of the seedlings should have puff fantasy markings in the eye. The data from the hybridizer is consistent with this prediction. This result would mean that other color pattern traits such as the dot/streak fantasy can be combined with the white edges. For example, crossing 'MyJoy' with any plant with dot/streak fantasy should produce tri-color blooms. These plants would have white edges and colored centers with fantasy markings and would be produced in the F1 or first generation. Having both the wide white edges and fantasy markings as dominant genetic traits will allow hybridizers to produce many interesting plants quickly.

Q: Do you think that the white edges of 'MyJoy' can be combined with the raspberry edge trait?

A: The raspberry edge trait is another genetic dominant flower pattern trait. However, if combined with the genetic dominant white edges of 'MyJoy', I have doubts that both traits can be combined together. I suspect that the wide white edges works by blocking all expression of color in the petals. Raspberry edge is a trait that concentrates a band of color on the edges. I'm going to predict that "non-color" is going to trump or over-ride "color" when these two traits come up against each other. I think

your F1 offspring will have wide white edges, but show no trace of the raspberry edge trait.

If the prediction is correct, the F1 plants will still carry the trait for raspberry edges, but it will not be expressed. The genetic term for this condition is "epistasis", meaning that one trait stands on top of, or prevents a second trait from being expressed. This means that if the F1 plants are crossed to a solid colored plant with non white edges, the raspberry edge trait could be expressed in the next generation. I would predict that some offspring will have the wide white edges, some would have raspberry edges, and some might be solids. The raspberry edge would just "appear" without having been seen in the parents. It will look like it has skipped a generation, something we don't expect to happen with a genetic dominant trait.

Q: What would you predict in the offspring if 'MyJoy' was crossed with a thumbprint patterned flower?

A: A prediction on this combination of traits is going to be tricky, but could be very interesting. The thumbprint trait tends to produce plants with white centers and petal edges, allowing the production of color in the petal centers. It is possible that the two traits could simply combine. The flowers may be white edged, white centered, and produce only small thumbprints in the lower half of the petal centers. The combination of traits would be best expressed on star-shaped flowers. I don't know how wide the area of color would be in the petals, but it might be a small comma-shaped area about 1/4 to 1/8 the area of the petal. This could be an interesting combination of traits and well worth the experiment.

The other possibility is that one of the traits will dominate or be epistatic to the other and only one pattern will be expressed. However, since the area permitted to produce pigment or color is different in the two traits, I'm more inclined to think that they will interact in some fashion and restrict the areas of color according to the expression of each trait separately. Using a fantasy thumbprint such as 'Playful Spectrum' could add another interesting wrinkle to this combination cross as the fantasy trait should be expressed in any area that does produce color.

Q: Could the colored eye of the myViolet series be produced in the coral and coral red colors?

A: I see no reason why the colored eye could not be produced in coral or coral red. The myViolet series appears to be in the non-coral colors right now. Those colors would dominate the coral colors which are recessive. I'd suggest crossing 'MyJoy' with a coral or coral red plant. The F1 generation would have the wide white pattern, but the eyes would be in the non-coral colors. Back-crossing an F1 plant to the coral or coral red parent should allow the eye color of some of the offspring to be coral or coral red. A plant with wide white edges and coral red eyes should be especially attractive.

Q: Would you recommend using double flowered plants in crosses with the myViolet series?

A: This would be a matter of taste. I find the contrast between the wide white edges and the colored centers to be most dramatic in contrast when expressed on single petals. Most of the myViolet series are singled petaled or semi-doubles, probably for this reason of catching the customer's eye. Try some crosses with double petaled plants and see what you get. The wide white edges should still be expressed on doubled petaled flowers, but I think you lose some of the contrast between the edges and the colored center.

Q: Would there be any advantage to combining the Geneva edge to the myViolet plants?

A: Since both traits put a white edge on the flowers, I don't think you'll get any even wider white edge in combining the traits together. I always encourage hybridizers to try crosses like this just to see what happens, but if your space is limited I'd recommend choosing other parents or pursuing other hybridization ideas.

Note: From the Editor: The text of Dr. Smith's column for the November/December AVM was mistakenly placed under the Question Box column header, featuring Sue Haffner. See pages 8 & 9, in the Nov/Dec 2015 AVM. Rather than reprint the article in this issue, Dr. Smith suggested redirecting our readers to the pages, and moving on with his next column. Sorry for the inconvenience.

Ruth Rumsey-Editor

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Where do you buy your African violets? Most of us probably buy from well-known vendors, like The Violet Barn, Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Inc., and others. We may acquire new violets at the local club show. Others may be a gift from a friend or trades with other hobbyists. Another place to purchase violets is eBay.

Many have at least heard of this online auction site, but may not be familiar with it. Founded in September 1995 by Pierre Oimdyar, this venue was designed to promote the sale of goods and services between individuals. This is an auction site. Buyers can outbid other buyers, and eventually win the auction. Often, there is an opportunity to buy a listing outright. The ever-expanding World Wide Web has made this site a phenomenon in its own right.

Getting an eBay account is fairly easy. Google eBay, and you will be taken to the site. You then have the option of registering with either a personal or business account. Bloomlovers and other businesses had violets listed for sale, as did many individuals. The registration procedure is standard: first and last name; email address; and password. The latter did prove to be a bit frustrating. It asked for the usual required number of letters and required at least one symbol, too. Although a capital letter was not required in the directions, a trial password was not accepted until one was added. eBay will then issue a unique id that will display whenever you sell, bid, or buy something.

I typed African Violets in the search bar after logging on to the site. Various options came up, I stayed with my original choice. Individual listings, with photos appeared. The photos usually showed the blossom for the plant, as they do on other seller sites. Clicking on the listing showed additional photos, usually including a photo of what the buyer was actually bidding on.

The latest bid, or sometimes the minimum bid to get the auction started was listed. Buyers are told what the next acceptable minimum bid will be. Most of the bids I saw were between five and ten dollars, for leaves, plugs, or starter plants. The highest bid I noticed was for a starter plant of the chimera Parisienne. The seller was starting the auction at $50.00. At viewing time, there were no bids, but there were six days left for the particular auction listing.

Shipping is not included in the auction price and the buyer pays shipping. For plants, this ranged from $6.00, up to $9.00.

eBay has a rating system for its sellers, called a feedback score. This is displayed on the right side of the screen when a listing is pulled up. This helps potential buyers determine whether the seller is reputable. Click on the seller's unique id, and the feedback is displayed. Many sellers have ratings of 100%, meaning the customers have always been happy with their purchase and the service.

There are numerous auctions for African violet supplies, too. I found many bulk listings under the "African violet" search. Often, these listings are "Buy it now," some have the option of making an offer. The buyer will definitely want to do their math with some of these purchases. Compare these two listings: One had five sizes of plastic pots, with four of each size available for a 'buy it now' price of $15.00. The shipping was an additional $12.25. That made the cost of each pot $1.37.

A second listing offered 200 three-inch round pots for $50.00, with $6.80 added for shipping. The cost of each pot this time was just under 2 cents.

Typing in 'African violet pots' brought up listings for every size, shape, and color of plastic and ceramic pots. Anything a buyer might want, to coordinate with home décor, collections, or for any other reason is available in this area. Again, prices and shipping vary widely.

eBay is definitely a site where the buyer needs to be aware. It is advisable to know your budget and not get caught up in a bidding frenzy. Many of us have heard of violets selling for hundreds of dollars on this site. At the same time, you can also find out what something is worth by using eBay as a research site. If you are looking for something specific, chances are you can find it on eBay. It can be a fun site not only to use, but just to browse around, too. Find it at www.ebay.com

How I Grow Streptocarpus

By Holly Walker

I grow under lights and really don't pay attention to how close or far away the plants are from the lights, but I decided to measure for this article. My largest streps are about 8" from the lights, which are on for ten hours a day.

I get all of my soil supplies from John Cook at Cape Cod Violetry. My mix is one part each of perlite, vermiculite, and Pro Mix. I also throw in a handful of charcoal.

Even though the experts say not to wick water streps, I do! I don't have enough time to water each plant individually. I use just one strand of yarn (single ply) because they definitely don't like to be overwatered. Most of the time I use Peters 20-20-20 fertilizer, or whatever is handy!

I have read that streps like a fertilizer that is high in potassium (third number on the fertilizer label, which should be double the first number) but I haven't tried one of those varieties yet.

As for pot sizes, I kind of use the same rule as for violets: the pot should be 1/3 the size of the plant. Also, shallow pots are better than tall ones, as streps would rather be pot bound than over-potted. I use green plastic pots purchased from John Cook. (Ed.Note: See Cape Cod Violetry's ad on the inside back cover.)

As the blossoms start dying, remove them. Once all the flowers on a stalk have been removed, cut the stalk as low as possible. Don't worry if the soil dries out and your plant wilts, as it can withstand that. Just water the plant, and it will perk right up again.

I only divide my streps if it's a huge pot of many plants. When I repot, I take off some of the larger, outer leaves that have started to yellow a bit.

As for propagation, I use one of the fresher, dark green leaves toward the center of the plant. I use a razor blade and cut the leaf lengthwise on either side of the "mid rib."

Then, I cut those long strips into three or four smaller strips. I make a few rows of indentations in the soil and place the cut sides of the pieces down into the soil mix. I use the same soil for propagation as I do for other potting.

I use clear plastic salad-type take-out containers that have tops. I make sure the soil stays moist. In about six weeks, small plantlets should start to appear. Once they're about 2" in size, you can separate them from the leaf and pot them up, individually, into small pots.

From Ye Bay Stater,
publication of the Bay State AVS

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Rob's Twinkle Pink

Exhibited by: *Lynn Canning*

Hybridized by: *R. Robinson*

Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

LE-Prekrasnaia Kreolka

Exhibited by: *Suzanne Roberts*

Hybridized by: *E. Lebetskaia*

Standard

2016 AVSA Convention Awards Albuquerque, NM Convention

By Elmer Godeny

Specific Awards – Amateur Division

Best Holtkamp Collection – $300, rosette & coin – Holtkamp Greenhouses

2nd Best Holtkamp Collection – $200 & rosette – Holtkamp Greenhouses

3rd Best Holtkamp Collection – $100 & rosette – Holtkamp Greenhouses

Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection – $300 – Vladimir Kalgin

2nd Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection – $200 – Vladimir Kalgin

3rd Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection – $100 – Vladimir Kalgin

Best Robinson Collection – $200 – The Violet Barn ($50 gift certificate for a standard collection)

2nd Best Robinson Collection – $100 – The Violet Barn

Best Lyndon Lyon Collection – $200 – Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses – Paul Sorono

2nd Best Lyndon Lyon Collection – $100 – Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses – Paul Sorono

Best Buckeye Collection – $200 – Pat Hancock (OH)

2nd Best Buckeye Collection – $100 – Pat Hancock (OH)

Best Cajun's Collection – $75 – Belinda Thibodeaux (LA)

Best Cajun's Collection – $25 – Elmer Godeny (NJ)

Best African Violet in Show – $25 and Silver Memorial for Elmer & Fannie Hall – Ovella Hall (AR)

Best Standard African Violet in Show – $25 – Tom and Marge Savage (TX)

Best Vintage African Violet – $25 – Janice Goode (TX)

Best Chimera African Violet is Show – $50 – Starz N Streps (MI)

2nd Best Gesneriad – $25 – Elmer Godeny

Specific Variety Awards – Amateur Horticulture

Best "Aca's Libbie" – $50 – Tom & Libbie Glembocki (NC)

Best "Chinook Wind" – $50 – Tom & Libbie Glembocki (NC)

Best "Concord" – $100 – Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)

Best "The Alps" – $100 – Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)

Best "Ozark" Sinningia – $35 – Dave's Violets (MO)

Best "Happy Cricket" – $10 – Town & Country AVS (OH)

Best "Tina" (Maas) – $25 – Janet Riemer (NJ)

Best "Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler" – $100 – Pat Hancock (OH)

Best "Buckeye Nostalgia" – $100 – Pat Hancock (OH)

Best "Rodeo Country" – $75 – Spring Branch African Violet Club (TX)

Best "Del's Spring Blush" – $50 – Violet Reflections Online Group (IN) *In memory of Del Satchel*

Best "Lonestar Helen Mahr" – $50 – Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)

Best "Lonestar Twilight" – $25 – Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)

Best "Blue Eyed Russian 'EK Goluboglazaia Rossiia'" – $25 – Starz N Streps (MI)

Best "Le Karusel" – $25 – Starz N Streps

Best "Jersey Snow Flakes" – $25 – Robert Kurzynski (NJ)

Best "Persian Blue" – $25 – Susan Hapner (MO)

Specific Awards – Commercial Division

Best Holtkamp Collection – $300 & coin - Holtkamp Greenhouses

2nd Best Holtkamp Collection – $200 & rosette - Holtkamp Greenhouses

3rd Best Holtkamp Collection – $100 & rosette – Holtkamp Greenhouses

Other Awards – Amateur Horticulture

$10 – Nancy Amelung (MO)
$20 – Metropolitan St. Louis AV Council (MO)
$25 – Paula Bal (NJ)
In Honor of Robert Kurzynski
$25 – Columbus AV Society (OH)
$100 – Ohio State AV Society (OH)
$100 – Cincinnati AV Society (OH)

Other Awards – Commercial Division

$100 – AVS of Dayton (OH)

Other Awards – Design Division

$20 – Metropolitan ST. Louis AV Council (MO)
$25 – Albuquerque AV Club (NM)
$50 – Janet Fox (CA)

Other Awards -Undesignated

$10 – First AV Society of Wichita Falls (TX)
$20 – Thousand Oaks AV Society (CA)
$25 – John & Doris Brownlie (Canada)
$25 – Southern New Jersey AV Club (NJ)
$25 – Bloomin' Jungle (NY)
$25 – Judith Hess (WI)
$25 – North Texas AV Judges Council (TX)
$25 – South Coast AV Society (CA)
$25 – Tustana AV Society (CA)
$25 – The AV Council of Southern California (CA)
$25 – Leonard Re (CA)
$25 – Tristate AV Council (NJ)
$25 – Sayeh Beheshti (Canada)
$25 – Merideth Hall (TX)
$25 – Dr. & Mrs. Charles Ramser (TX)
$25 – Patty's Plants & Antiques (KS)
$25 – Ron & Jan Davidson (TX)
$25 – Fancy Bloomers (NJ)
$25 – North Star AV Council (MN)
$25 – Phillis Hinkle (GA)
$25 – Memphis AV Society (TN)
$25 – Delaware AV and Gesneriad Society (DE)
$50 – Diane Miller (CA)
$50 – Tampa AV Society (FL)
$50 – Janet Riemer (NJ)
$50 – Sue Hoffman (VA)
$50 – First Nighter AV Society (TX)
$50 – AVS of Greater Tulsa (OK)
$50 – John & Judith Carter (OK)
$50 – AV Society of Minnesota (MN)
$50 – AV Council of Florida (FL)
$50 – Tidewater AV Society (VA)
$50 – Kathy Lahti (MN)
$75 – Edna & Al Rourke (CT)
$100 – Winston & Laurel Goretsky (Canada)
$100 – Dr. Ben Haning (TX)
$100 – Bill Foster (TX)
$100 – Mary Corondan (TX)
$100 – Lone Star AV Council (TX)
$100 – Tucson AV Society (AZ)
$150 – Michael & Deborah McInnis (TN) $175 – Dr. Bill Price (Canada)

Thanks to the many individuals, clubs, and council who have offered their generous award support for the 2016 AVSA show in Albuquerque. It is your generosity that makes our show so special.

If your name is not on the list, there is still time to be included in the souvenir convention book (deadline is April 15, 2016). Send your donation to:

AVSA
Attention: Convention Show Awards
2375 North Street
Beaumont, TX 77702

We look forward to hearing from you! Space requirements limited our list in this issue, so please view the current awards listing on the AVSA website at **www.avsa.org**. Although every attempt has been made to list awards correctly, we reserve the right to modify or change those listed.

About African Violet Seeds and How We Produce Them

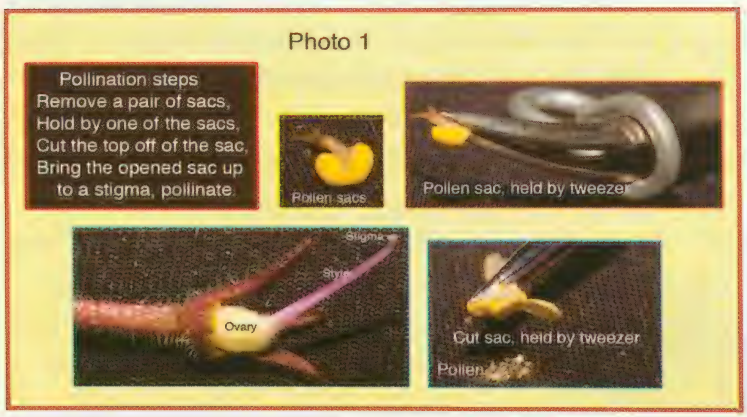
By Ronn Nadeau, Ph D
NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com

When I tell people that I grow African violets from seeds, they often reply, "Gee, I didn't know you could grow them that way." Less often, someone tells me that they tried pollinating but did not succeed, either because no pods formed, or the seeds they got from their efforts did not germinate. This article is about how to effectively pollinate African violets and make seeds that germinate.

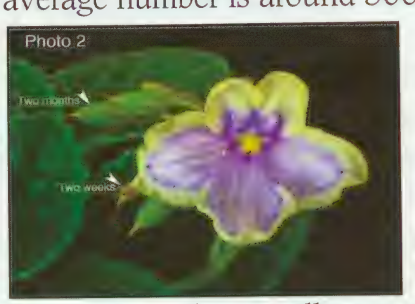
My wife, Katsuko, and I produce African violet seeds and sell them, wholesale and retail, to people all over the world, thirty-eight countries at last count and in every state of the Union since 1996. This article has information about how we produce our seeds, and has pictures of African violet seeds like you have never seen before.

Our method for pollinating is as follows (See Photo 1). The pollen of an African violet flower is enclosed within pollen sacs. With tweezers, pull a pollen sac pair from a flower. Hold the pollen sac pair by one of the sacs, and cut off part of the other sac's outer covering with a single edge razor blade to expose the pollen within. While still holding the opened pollen sac with tweezers, bring it up to the stigma of another flower (or the same flower for self-pollination) and touch its opened part to the stigma. With a well loaded pollen sac, it's possible to pollinate a half-dozen or more stigmas. See a pollinated stigma in Photo 2.

Photo 1



It is imperative to apply a large amount of microscopic pollen grains to a stigma in order to fertilize a large number of egg cells waiting in the ovary. Work with flowers that have powdery pollen as opposed to clumpy pollen. One pollen grain fertilizes only one egg cell, which can develop into only one seed. Applying a large number of pollen grains can lead to hundreds of fertilized eggs and development of hundreds of plump seeds in a pod. Under the best conditions, we occasionally get around 800 plump seeds in a single pod, but our average number is around 300.



Our ideal seed production varieties have the following qualities. They are attractive varieties that bloom profusely. Further, their flowers have large pollen sacs containing lots of dusty pollen. They readily form nice seed pods with plump seeds, and the seeds germinate well and produce attractive plants. Varieties possessing all of these qualities are rare and we constantly search for new ones to add to our stable of good seed producers. (Does anyone out there still grow a variety called "Grandma's Zach"? We dropped it a long time ago but now wish we still had it.)

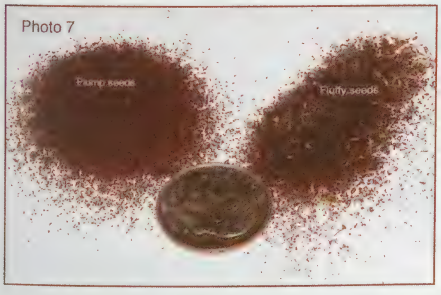
Photo 2 shows a seed production plant carrying some pods that are around two weeks and some around two months, post-pollination. The time from pollination to dry ripe pod varies according to the parent varieties and growing conditions, and is usually between 4 to 6 months. In Photo 2, note the flower's stigma showing fresh pollen from another plant. We call this mother plant "Gebaz," a name derived from the names of its two parents. We do not currently sell leaves and plants

Photo 3 shows a 4-month post-pollination pod after slicing it open to expose its immature white seeds. Have you ever seen African violet seeds like these? In addition to the white seeds, the pod also contains some dark colored, failed seeds, which are like the fluffy seeds described in the next paragraph.

Photo 3

Photo 4

Photo 4 shows a group of thirty-five mature dry pods, all of which came from the same mother plant, and Photo 5 one of those pods with most of its seeds spilled out. Photo 6 shows the seeds that came out of the thirty-five pods depicted in Photo 4. Ripened pods always contain a mixture of plump and fluffy seeds. The Photo 6 seeds were refined into two piles (Photo 7), one pile with plump seeds and the other with smaller, fluffy seeds.



Because fluffy seeds do not germinate, it is necessary to refine newly-isolated seeds in order to end up with mostly plump seeds that germinate well. The plump seeds look like tiny footballs when viewed under magnification. The plump are separated from the fluffy and other debris by placing the crude seeds on a sheet of printer paper, and, while shaking the paper at a downward angle, causing the plump seeds to selectively roll down and off the paper.

The percentage of plump seeds in a pod depends upon the parent varieties, the viabilities of the pollen and stigma at pollination time, the number of pollen grains applied, and can vary from zero to about 90%. If those factors are not optimal, the pods sometimes still develop to full size and ripen normally, but contain only a small number of plump seeds.

After refinement, the seeds from particular crosses are tested to determine their germination rates and are then stored in labeled vials under refrigeration at 40oF. As needed, seeds from various crosses are blended to produce one of our five seed selections: Standard, Miniature, Trailer, Fantasy, or Variegated Foliage. The blends are tested for germination and usually show values between 60 to 85%, except that our Miniature seeds have somewhat lower germination rates. We are considering dropping Miniature seeds from sale.

Finally, the seeds are packaged to contain at least 100 seeds per packet. When the germination rate of a particular batch of seeds is on the low side, such as with our Miniature seeds, we compensate by putting more seeds in those packets. Our aim is to supply enough seeds per packet for customers to produce around thirty plants. If the customer uses our seed germination kit under ideal conditions, per the instructions card included with each order, they can obtain considerably more plants per packet. Our seeds begin to germinate at thirteen to fifteen days after sowing. They do not germinate evenly. In other words, seedlings continue to pop up for weeks after the beginning of germination.

As they say on *The Five* TV show (Fox News), here's "One more thing." We have discovered that white immature seeds harvested from green pods, such as those shown in Photo 3, can be sown in

the usual way and yield normal seedlings, this with seeds that are as young as 57 days post-pollination (about 20% of the average days to maturity). The 57-day seeds germinated at a low rate, but 87-day seeds (50% of days to maturity) did so at a high rate. This was done by opening immature green pods with a razor blade, scraping the white seeds out with a spatula directly onto the surface of the sowing medium, and otherwise proceeding as if they were normal seeds.

Note: Close-up photos were shot using a Canon 40D camera equipped with a Canon Speedlight flash and Sigma 105mm macro lens. Thank you for reading.

Luncheon Auction

Edna Rourke • 99 Old Stratford Road
Shelton, CT 06484-6129 • Apapillon@aol.com • 203-926-9716

AVSA's 70th Convention-"Violets Color the Land of Enchantment" in Albuquerque, NM is sure to be a great one and will be here before your know it. Now is the time to start thinking of the Luncheon Auction. Our past auction success has all been due to the very generous donations of our members both amateur and commercial. With your help and support, I'm sure this auction will be the best one yet.

Won't you consider donating a violet-related item or violet-related craft item to the auction either as an individual member or as a club. Your donations make the auction possible. Donations of anything violet related or of a rare, unique or unusual nature will be most gratefully accepted.

To our hybridizers and commercial members, both here and abroad, I extend an invitation to kindly donate either supplies, newly introduced plant material or plants. As in the past, these donations are a very important part of the auction and can make for some very lively bidding.

A listing of all donations and contributors will be acknowledged on the luncheon tables.

Would you either call or email me and let me know if you plan to make a donation or want to help in some way. I'd really appreciate it. I can be reached by either calling 203-926-9716 or emailing Apapillon@aol.com. I look forward to having the opportunity to speak with you soon.

Your help and support will make this auction the best ever!

I look forward to seeing you in Albuquerque.

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

Sept. 1 – Oct. 31, 2015

Janet Riemer

256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd., Pennington, NJ 08534

Fantasy ($500-$999)

The Verbeau AVC (LA)

(In memory of members who have passed away, Geneva Garnett, Elsa Ezell, Melba Karamales, Melba Hughes, Eileen Stannard and in honor of Helen Hamsley for her violet contributions for annual sales each year.)

Multicolor ($50-$99)

Ohio State AVS

South Miami Garden Club

In lieu of speakers' fee for Sue Samuels and Erma Maxwell of the Caribbean Basin AV & Ges. Soc. Ohio State AVS

Thumbprint (under $25)

Linda Springer

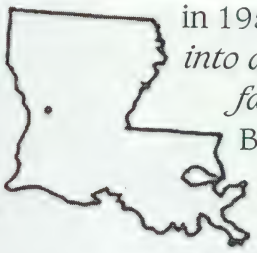
Gail Podany

Total this period: $877.00

The Verbeau African Violet Club

The last several years have been very hard for the Verbeau African Violet Club of Leesville, LA.

Several long-time and Charter Members passed away.



In honor of their passing, and the devotion of a surviving club member, the club has made a substantial donation to AVSA's Tinari Endowment Fund.

Memorials for these dedicated club members were sent to the AVSA Office for inclusion in the AVM, by long time club member, and dear friend, **Jo Beth Jeane**.

Helen Wamsley was a longtime member of the Verbeau AVC until the club disbanded in 2015. Each year she provided 200 – 300 African violets for the club sales.

Considered a "great lady," Helen still grows some African violets.

Charter Member, **Elsa Ezell** passed away in 2014. A native of Czechoslovakia, She was very proud of receiving her United States Citizenship in 1961. Elsa held several important positions in the Club through the years, and enjoyed sharing tips and hints for growing beautiful plants.

In 2006, Charter member **Geneva Cox Garnett**, passed away.

A military wife, she live in many different stations, before coming back to Leesville for good in 1956. *"Geneva could take a leaf and turn it into a beautiful violet, which she shared with family and friends,"* said her best friend, Jo Beth Jeane. Jo Beth always made sure Geneva had transportation to and from the club meetings, since Geneva had never learned to drive.

The club lost Charter member **Eileen Search Hartzell Stannard** in 2015. Eileen was a high school teacher for fifteen years, after having graduated from Temple University. She loved music, playing the piano, organ, and the harp. Her husband was an Army chaplain, and she assisted him in his chaplain activities. She also sang in Temple University and Church choirs.

Proud member of the Verbeau African Violet Club and the African Violet Society, **Melba Hughes** passed away in 2014. Melba was also a member of the Vernon Homemakers group, and enjoyed growing plants, quilting, music, sewing, reading, and her family.

A loyal member of the Verbeau African Violet Club, **Melba West Karamales**, found joy in her African violets and participating in the club activities. She enjoyed sharing her hobby with her many friends and family.

Growing Achimenes

By Thad Scaggs

One way of separating gesneriads is by their root systems. There are three types, fibrous (African violets, streptocarpus, episcia), tuberous (sinningia, nautilocalyx) and rhizomatous (achimenes, smithianthas, kohleria). Tubers and rhizomes are actually storage facilities so the plant can rest by going dormant for awhile then grow and bloom again. Dormancy periods vary with the genus, and culture may play a part. Breaking dormancy is usually triggered by the season or replanting, if you've removed it or them from the pot, then giving them water and light. All three types have fibrous feeder roots that grow from the tubers or rhizomes.

A mexicana

A. Ambroise Verschaffelt

Achimenes are easy to grow, they keep easily for years, and make a colorful pot container or hanging basket that look very similar to the annual, Impatiens. They will take the extreme temperatures of our southern states but will grow in the northern Dixie and surrounding states outdoors. They also make excellent specimen pots in any city, state, or country, under the same lights that we grow our African violets.

Their rhizomes look somewhat like a pine cone, but are made up of separate scales. The scales can be sown individually like seeds (for mass propagation usually), but scales often take a good bit longer and you get very small plants their first season. When making pots, about one half-inch rhizome will make a nice plant in a community pot like a hanging basket. I use pieces of rhizomes about 1" or so if I have plenty, or when growing some of the other rhizomatous genera. They can be propagated by the rhizomes getting larger and making more during the growing season. Tip cuttings root easily, as well.

Start with a good quality, well drained, potting mix. I use my AV/gesneriad mix if I'm growing a pot on my light stands. Most of my achimenes are grown outdoors on my lanai, so I use a good commercial mix like Miracle Gro for those because African violet or wicking mixes are too light for growing outdoors in the heat and stronger light that most of mine are grown in. Even with a well-drained mix, achimenes should never sit in water. But they must never dry out, especially in higher light.

When you're ready to pot, make little holes 1"-1 1/2" deep about 3" apart. I often wait until I see a rhizome sprouting before planting, but achimenes are usually the first to sprout; ready before I am and before my other rhizomatous genera. If they haven't sprouted, meaning you can't see any growth breaking from the rhizome, plant them in the

A. dulcis (58)

Achimenes 8-24-08 004

holes, cover and water them in, then water sparingly until you see sprouts coming through the mix. Don't worry about which side is up. If they haven't sprouted, lay them on their sides. Even if planted upside down, they will seek out the light.

I grow most of my achimenes outdoors. In a 10" hanging basket, I use 16 small pieces about 1/2", easily sectioned from larger rhizomes. I start with one in the center of the basket, five midway between center and rim, then ten about 1" from the outer pot rim. Three in a 4" pot is fine; they branch easily with their tips pinched. When there are several sets of leaves, often sets of three, pinch the top set; they will branch out. You can pinch again after the branches have a few leaf sets for a fuller pot, though it will delay blooming for two to three weeks. They should be kept moist and receive food regularly to produce the best foliage and most blossoms. I have also grown them in the ground, and they did survive our mild winters in Florida. They would not survive north of Florida and probably only in northern Florida if they'd been planted near a heated structure and mulched.

Achimenes hanging baskets

Achimenes will grow and bloom in strong morning light, as well as almost full sun. They are not the shade lovers impatiens are. They prefer a little higher light. I grow most of mine in full sun with the only diffuser being the screen covering my lanai. They will grow and flourish in higher light if started there, but if they dry out, their foliage will let you know it's unhappy very quickly. Drying out can also cause them to slip into dormancy before the season is over.

When they're finished blooming, they will stop making buds, usually after a cold snap. I let mine continue to grow until the foliage starts looking pretty ratty, hoping they make more rhizomes as they go dormant. When the foliage is sufficiently ratty, or dried up, I cut it off and set my hanging baskets in an unheated storage building well behind my house. In the spring, I finger sift the pots to thin and share rhizomes. I've done the same with smaller pots of achimenes as well as smithianthas, and the other rhizomatous genera that require rest after blooming.

Kohleria is the only rhizomatous genus that will continue to thrive after blooming. As long as they receive food, water, and light, they will grow and bloom continuously with good culture. You can remove the rhizomes from the pot when they go dormant and save them until time to replant. If you prefer to remove the rhizomes when they go dormant, they should be kept in small zip lock bags with barely damp moss, or vermiculite, until ready to start again. You can find the small zip lock bags at Walmart or Michael's.

From *The Dixie News*

Question Box

By Sue Haffner

3015 Timmy Ave. • Clovis, CA 93612
Email: sueh@csufresno.edu • haff.sue2@gmail.com

Hello, Violet Friends,

I hope that you and your violets are doing well and that you are looking forward to the New Year with all its triumphs and challenges.

In my last column (July-August issue) I wrote about a friend who had moved to Arizona a year ago, taking a lot of plants with her. After she had been there awhile, she emailed me with a problem that one of her African violets was having and I gave her some advice about it. As I started thinking about this column, I emailed again to ask her how that plant was doing. She responded that, a month before my inquiry, her air conditioning had broken down and it had taken three weeks to get it fixed. The temperature in her house had been 95 - with fans - 85 at night. Needless to say, her indoor plants had cooked, all of them. Ah, well, I guess I won't know if my repotting advice helped her plant or not.

Before I begin the questions, I thought I would pass along an anecdote from the latest issue of Home greenhouse, the magazine of the Hobby Greenhouse Association. Genie, in Raleigh N.C., wrote: "Having re-potted a couple of plants with [a well-known brand of potting mix], I turned off the lights in the house before going to bed, but left a light on over the kitchen sink. There was a medium size bowl in the sink filled with soapy suds. When I got up in the morning, there were lots and lots of dead fungus gnats in the soap suds! A-hah! Light directed to the soapy suds evidently attracted the gnats. This gave me the idea to put an infected plant at the sink's edge before going to bed, along with one or two sudsy containers by it. Sure enough, in the morning the suds would have dead gnats. Going one step further, before going to bed, I would work up some suds in the sink and scoop handfuls to completely cover the soil of the plant, then turn on the kitchen sink light, place my plant and sudsy containers at the sink and go to bed. This was a pretty effective treatment system. However, complete eradication would take 4-5 weeks, depending on the number of potted plants that were affected. (I only had to completely cover the soil in the pots with soap suds 2-3 times over the course of a week or two, but I believe that this might have cut off newly hatching gnats.)"

Genie gave me permission to use this, but emphasized that it wasn't African violets that she was treating this way. Still, I thought this was an interesting way to deal with the fungus gnat issue. (You will find an ad for the Hobby Greenhouse Association in the African violet magazine. Its quarterly publication always has articles of interest to plant people.)

Q. I found a mite spray at the pet store. It's for birds, but I wonder if I could use it for African violets. If it's okay for birds, it must not be really dangerous to handle.

A. Well, there are many different kinds of mites. I suspect that the mites that infest birds are not the same as the mites that can bedevil violet growers. Also, I imagine the recommended treatment or dosage would not be relevant for use on plants. You always have to be careful when you re-purpose commercial products sold for issues other than plant care. If you have - or suspect - mites, follow the tried-and-true advice that we all should follow: immediately isolate any affected plants; discard, pot and all, if they appear too far gone; treat your remaining collection with products specifically made for cyclamen or broad mites; monitor the plants for any signs of an infestation.

In responding to this question, I was checking the Internet for bird mite products to see if I could find what chemicals they contained. Along the way, I found a reference to "anti-mite shelf paper." Whoa! Could that be a product useful for plant growers? I could imagine placing this paper on

shelves under plant trays. That would take care of your mite problems, right? It turns out to be made for those who raise frogs and other amphibians and reptiles. These critters only eat live food so those who raise them need to cultivate fruit flies, and the fly cultures can become infested with parasitic mites. It's really interesting to see the lengths these folks go to in order to protect these food sources. (They might probably feel the same way about how we violet growers obsess about our plants.)

Q. A friend gave me a violet awhile back. She said she bought it off the Internet only because she liked its name. 'Jeepers Creepers', but she really isn't a violet grower. She'd planted the violet in a clay pot, and it had been on her kitchen windowsill for some time. Still, it looked pretty good and was blooming. Being a lazy slug, I just put it on my kitchen windowsill (east exposure) and watered it whenever it looked droopy. It's never out of bloom. But it really needs to be repotted. I've been wondering if it would be okay to put it in another clay pot - since it's doing so well - and maybe wick it. Have you ever heard of wicking a clay pot? (Most of my other violets are under lights, in plastic pots, wicked in the usual way.)

A. Have to confess I've never heard of wicking a clay pot. (I'm assuming the question refers to an unglazed clay pot.) These containers are porous and dry out quickly. I guess you could wick it, but I'm thinking it would use up the reservoir water pretty fast, and you would have to monitor the pot closely to be aware of when it's wet or dry. The usual light potting mix that we use for wicked plants might not be appropriate for such a container; it would dry out too fast. You would need to use a mix that was heavier and "tighter." The constant evaporation from the sides of the pot might serve to keep the roots cool, but, on the other hand, the roots might migrate to the edges of the pot and dry there when the pot dried. Also, mineral salts in the water - if that's a problem in your area - tend to be absorbed into the pores of a clay pot and are expressed as white, crusty deposits. It's not clear to what extent this might harm the plant, but I would repot if I saw such deposits. Well, bottom line, I wouldn't say not to do it; it would be an interesting experiment; but I wouldn't use a plant that I really cared about. Let us know how it works out.

Q. Can you explain this? I had a real thrips problem, so I stripped off all blooms and buds from my collection and saturated the plants with an Orthene spray. I repeated the spray a week later. Then my husband and I left for 3 weeks; I made sure all the plant reservoirs were full and the timers on the light stand were set as I wanted them. When we got home, I found the plants full of suckers. I spent a week separating them. Shortly after, the plants started blooming oddly: singles were now doubles, and vice versa; colors seemed enhanced - except for whites and purples. Pinks, light blues, fuchsias and lavenders seemed to be three shades deeper. What happened? Did they all sport? At least the thrips were gone!

A. At first reading, it sounded to me as though the plants were responding to some sort of trauma. Severe disbudding can be traumatic for some violets, especially if the bloom stalks might have been pulled off a bit too roughly. And then the plants were treated with a strong systemic organophosphate. Reading about Orthene on the Integrated Pest Management page of University of California, Davis I found that such chemicals can damage plants in various ways, including disrupting the way pigments are carried to flowers. I wonder if that is what the grower is seeing. What would be interesting is to watch and see if any of these changes are permanent. I'm a bit surprised that anyone would use Orthene in the house (unless the spraying was done outside; she didn't make that clear.) Yes, it's listed for use on thrips, but the experts don't recommend its use anymore, given the environmental damage it has caused.

"What About Those Philly Girls?"

By Members of the AVS of Springfield, Delaware County, PA

What is an African violet convention without The Philly Girls from the AVS of Springfield, Pennsylvania? The fun-loving ladies enjoy dressing in outlandish costumes to promote the theme of a particular African violet convention. John Cook of Cape Cod Violetry coined the phrase *"them Philly Girls"* and introduced the original three Philly Girls when Joan Santino was the AVS Springfield Affiliate President and was joined by Barbara Jones and Peggy Mooney, at the 2010 Mid-Atlantic AVS (MAAVS) Convention in Owego, New York. Later, at the 2011 MAAVS convention in Richmond, VA, the fourth Philly Girl, Linda Kilby, joined the group.

The idea of dressing up with a theme started at the 2009 MAAVS convention in Williamsburg, Virginia. MAAVS members always dressed up during dinner on the Friday evening of their annual Show and Sale. Joan Santino persuaded Barbara Jones and Peggy Mooney to join her in promoting the 2011 AVSA National Convention, Philadelphia/Cherry Hill, at the Friday evening MAAVS costume dinner. They wore red blazers and Philadelphia Phillies red and white neck scarves. Signs on their backs announced "*Think Philly*" at Peggy Mooney's suggestion.

In 2010 at the combined AVSA National and MAAVS Convention in Raleigh, North Carolina, when the theme was **"The Once and Future Violet,"** as a way to raise funds for the upcoming 2011 AVSA National Convention, AVS Springfield, under the direction and support of Peggy Mooney, asked AVSA members to share their favorite recipes.

As a result of this effort, we were able to introduce our fund-raising cookbook, "*Thyme With Violets, a collection of recipes from the kitchens of African violet enthusiasts.*" The Philly Girls promoted cookbook sales and their outfits featured purple aprons. The project was a huge success. *Over 900 cookbooks were sold.*

Since then, the four Philly Girls have shared their enthusiasm for African violets at each of the MAAVS and AVSA conventions. Listed are some of the conventions and the costume themes:

November 2009 – MAAVS - Williamsburg, VA (Joan, Barbara, Peggy – Think Philly with red jackets)

"Things GO Better with African Violets" May, 2010 – AVSA, Raleigh, NC (Joan, Barbara, Peggy, and Linda) Introduction of the cookbook:

"Thyme with Violets" The handmade apron pattern was very similar to the pattern on the cookbook cover.

November, 2010 - MAAVS - Owego, NY (Joan, Peggy and Barbara - Think Philly with red jackets)

"Violets Go Native" May, 2011 – AVSA - Cherry Hill (Joan, Peggy and Barbara) dressed in colonial costumes with General George Washington.

"Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Violets" November, 2011 - MAAVS – Baltimore, MD (Joan, Barbara, Peggy and Linda) dressed with feathers

"Violets in Birdland" November, 2012 MAAVS – Richmond, VA (Joan, Barbara and Linda) dressed in Tropical Caftan.

"South Sea Violets" November, 2013 MAAVS – New Bern, NC (Joan Barbara, Peggy and Linda)

"Bears Bear It All in New Bern" (Goldilocks & The Three Bears) November, 2014 MAAVS - Wilmington, DE (Joan, Barbara, Peggy, Linda, and John Cook)

"Diamonds are Forever" Glamorous Ladies with Sparkles and Lights May, 2015 AVSA - Kansas City (Joan, Barbara, Peggy and Linda) dressed in their handmade aprons.

Goldilocks and the 3 Bears - Linda as Goldilocks, Barbara as Papa Bear, Joan as Mama Bear and Peggy as Baby Bear.

Linda, Barbara, John Cook, Joan and Peggy at MAAVS in Wilmington, DE the theme is Diamonds are Forever!

"Violets Love Kansas City Jazz, Blues and Barbecue" the ladies are serving Violets on silver trays and wearing signs encouraging the members to shop with the commercial vendors.

November, 2015 MAAVS – York, PA (Joan, Barbara, Linda, Alice, and Joanne)

You can only imagine the next direction for The Philly Girls; but they hope to see you in May 2016 at the AVSA National Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico, when the theme will be **"Violets Color the Land of Enchantment"**

Joan, Barbara, Peggy and Linda serving African Violets at the AVSA luncheon in KC.

MAAVS 2015 in York, PA
Alice, Joanne, Linda, Barbara and Joan in our new club shirts.

Dramatic Effect of Fertilizer on Growth of Germinated African Violet Seedlings

By Ronn Nadeau, Ph D, Organic Chemistry
NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com

Abstract: Two soilless mixes were compared for their capacity to germinate African violet seeds. The seeds germinated well on each mix. However, an unexpected result ensued as the seedlings on one of the mixes did not grow beyond being tiny. A continuation of the experiment showed that the tiny seedlings were induced to grow simply by irrigation with fertilized water. The results showed that African violet seeds should be sown on a medium that already contains fertilizer or, if the medium does not contain it, that newly emerged seedlings should be irrigated with fertilizer solution soon after germination.

In an earlier article (AVM, Sept, 2009, p 46), I presented data showing that African violet seed germination varies greatly depending upon the medium on which the seeds are sown. Based on such experiments, I recommend Fafard Germination Mix for germinating African violet seeds, and I make it available to my customers at a small additional cost when they purchase our seeds.

In June of 2015 a friend gave me a bag of soilless mix labeled "Optimara Potting Soil." Since I had not previously tested that mix, I did an experiment to see how it would compare with Fafard Germination Mix for germinating African violet seeds.

The experiment had four pots, labeled A, B, C, and D. Pots A and B contained Optimara mix, and pots C and D were controls containing Fafard mix. The mixes were all moistened with plain tap water and all other steps were as described per the instructions that come with the seeds we sell, and which are included at the end of this article. All four pots were sown with seeds from the same batch of our Fantasy African violet seeds, 100 seeds per pot.

At 14 days post-sowing the germination rates were evaluated and all four pots showed rates close to 65%. Usually that would be "end of story", with the Optimara mix being given a green light.

However, the four pots were forgotten, left untended under lights and enclosed in their moisture holding plastic baggies until 54 days post-sowing when I was about to discard them to make space. Then I got a big surprise. The seedlings in the four pots appeared as shown in Photo 1. The Fafard mix seedlings in pots C and D had grown as expected for fifty-four days, but the seedlings in the Optimara mix pots were still tiny, had not grown at all since they were evaluated at fourteen days! They are barely visible in pots A and B of Photo 1. The white spots you can see in pots A and B are bits of Styrofoam, an ingredient in the Optimara mix.

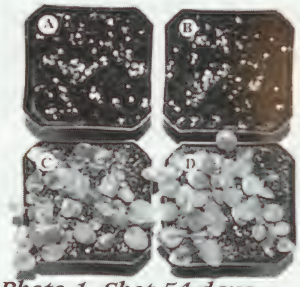


Photo 1. Shot 54 days post-sowing 100 AV seeds. A and B, Optimara mix; C and D, Fafard mix. See text.

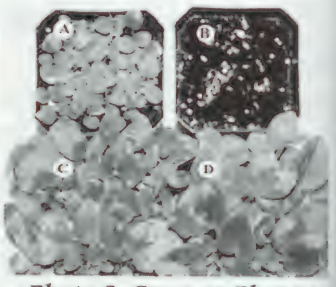


Photo 2. Same as Photo 1, but 107 days post-sowing. Text explains why seedings in A made a come-back.

I hypothesized that the tiny seedlings in pots A and B of Photo 1 remained tiny because the Optimara mix might have contained insufficient amounts of fertilizer to promote post-germination growth. It is important to repeat that at the start of the experiment the mixes in all four pots were moistened with plain tap water containing no

fertilizer, and the pots were enclosed in plastic baggies and not watered before their fifty-fourth day post-sowing.

To test the fertilizer idea, at the 55th day post-sowing I began watering pot A with Jack's 15-16-17 Peat-Lite granular fertilizer (1/4 teaspoon per gallon of tap water). Simultaneously, I watered pot B only with plain tap water. At only five days later, the fertilized seedlings in pot A began to distinguish themselves from the unchanging seedlings in pot B. And, as can be seen in Photo 2, by fifty-three days post-fertilizing (107 days post-sowing) the seedlings of pot A had grown considerably, while the no-fertilizer pot B seedlings remained tiny.

My wife, Katsuko, and I have been producing and selling African violet seeds for almost forty years. I recall that a long time ago we tried sowing seeds on horticultural vermiculite and got good germination but no growth. Then, I thought that the vermiculite might have contained something toxic to their growth. Now, finally, I think I know the real reason why those seedlings did not grow, but have not done the test to prove it.

Conclusions: The seedlings in pot A of Photo 2 recovered from their no-growth period because fertilizer solution began to be applied at fifty-four days post-sowing. The seedlings in pot B of Photos 1 and 2, which did not receive applied fertilizer, did not grow past the germination stage due to

insufficient fertilizer in their soilless mix to promote post-germination growth.

Below is shown one side of a 4"x6" Instructions card that we include with every order. The other side of the card has color photos describing what to do with seedlings when they reach transplant stage. Thank you for reading.

Below is shown one side of a 4"x6" Instructions card that we include with every order. The other side of the card has color photos describing what to do with seedlings when they reach transplant stage. Thank you for reading.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The Nadeau AV Seed Kit has everything needed for sowing AV seeds and growing the seedlings to transplant stage. If you have the Kit, follow the Kit steps below. If you do not have the Kit, follow the Kit steps using your own materials (soilless mix, pot or container, etc.).

KIT INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1. Fill the 3-ounce Solo cup to the brim with tap water and pour into the zip-lock bag containing 50 grams of soilless germination mix (Mix). Close the bag and shake it until the Mix is evenly moistened.

Step 2. Transfer the moist Mix to the 3.5-inch square pot and tamp it down with a spoon to provide a flat, even surface on which to sow the seeds.

Step 3. The seeds are tiny! Open the outer packet and remove the inner glassine packet of seeds. Pour the seeds onto a postcard-size piece of white paper, and then sprinkle them evenly onto the surface of the Mix. **Do not** cover the seeds with Mix!

Step 4. Enclose the pot in the "Fold & Close" sandwich bag with the flap folded under the pot. Moisture will remain in the pot and water need not be added until much later. Place the pot 10 - 12 inches under fluorescent light or window light, but not direct sun. Best temps for germination are 75 - 80F. Condensation will appear on the inside of the plastic bag. Tiny green specks of germinated seedlings will begin to appear around 15 days after sowing and more will germinate during the following weeks.

Step 5. At about 6 - 8 weeks after sowing, when the seedlings are about 0.5 inches tall, the bag should be loosened and removed over the course of a few days. Then gently water the seedlings with dilute (0.25 teasp /gal) balanced (e.g. 12-12-12) fertilizer solution.

NOTES

If you are not using our Kit or our germination mix, you could purchase Miracle-Gro African Violet Mix, which we know works well for germinating and growing the seedlings. After germination, the tiny seedlings grow very slowly, so please be patient with them. Later they will grow faster.

© Ronn Nadeau 2015

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Jersey Snow Flakes

Exhibited by: *Richard Nicholas*

Hybridized by: *R. Kurzynski*

Standard

Linda Darnel

Exhibited by: *Patty Daniel*
Hybridized by: *P. Tracey*
Semiminiature Trailer

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Optimara Little Blackfoot

Exhibited by:
Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by: *Holtkamp*
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

AVSA 2016 Board Nominees

For Director: Johnnie W. Berry

I started growing African violets in 1975 when I was helping a lady with her garden. She gave me some African Violet Magazines (AVM) and a table-top grow lamp. My first violet was an Optimara 'Saturn' with its bright blue blooms, and I fell in love with those soft, fuzzy leaves. I began to buy an assortment of colorful violets whenever I had a chance. In 1981, I was volunteering at the Atlanta Botanical Garden as a new Master Gardener, when I met Kathy Spissman at an AVC of Greater Atlanta (AVCGA) meeting. I received so much helpful information that I immediately joined that night.

I strive to learn everything I can; to care for, and grow healthy plants. I now grow over 400 African violets and 100 of the other gesneriads. To know what Flower Show judges were looking for in a blue ribbon specimen, I became an Accredited Flower Show Judge.

I now belong to eight different plant societies, as my love of plants has expanded. I specifically became an African Violet Judge to be able to grow exquisite show plants. I have served as a Show Chairman for the Dixie AVS (DAVS) and the AVCGA, as Membership Chairman and now the President of the AVCGA. I'm extremely humbled and honored to serve as a Director on the African Violet Society of America (AVSA).

Julie Jones

As an African violet grower and member of AVSA for many years, I am honored to be nominated to serve as a Director for AVSA.

I joined Columbus AVS, Ohio State AVS, and AVSA in the 1980's. I grew anything, and everything. I became a student judge, and served as secretary and vice president of Columbus AVS. While preparing for the 1992 AVSA national convention in Columbus, I returned to The Ohio State University to attend The College of Medicine, married, and soon began having children. I stepped away from growing violets as life was becoming increasingly busy.

As our children grew out of the toddler stage, I returned to violets. I updated my memberships and judge's exam. I am the immediate past President of the Ohio State AVS, and a new member of the AVSA Library Committee. I have attended ten AVSA and Ohio State AVS conventions.

Outside violets, I have my family and work. My husband and I recently celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary. We have four children, ages 15-23. I am a board certified obstetrician-gynecologist in a large medical practice in central Ohio.

Unlike my early growing days, I no longer try to grow everything. Instead, I focus on miniatures and semi-miniatures. I keep the number of plants manageable so upkeep is enjoyable instead of daunting. Despite my enjoyment of violets, I have always said that I enjoy violet people more than violets. I have met so many folks through violets I would never have had an opportunity to meet otherwise.

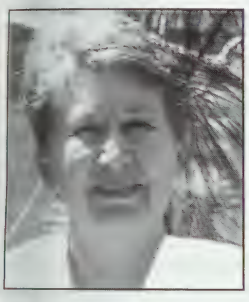
AVSA Director Nominee - Linda Rowe

As a grower of African Violets, I love talking to people about their plants. To have an opportunity to show people there are violets they have never seen is a pure joy. Thanks to the internet, and shows, I can show off the hundreds of exciting varieties that I, and others grow. I have been growing African Violets for over 30 years, and keep over 10,000 plants in various stages in my home.

The purpose of any club is to educate the public. Through the internet, public speaking, TV, and displays, the goal of my home club and I is to bring attention to African violets and the shows.

To serve as a director of AVSA would be an honor, and I hope the views I have from the "other

side" of the table as a commercial grower would be of value to AVSA. My violets are my life, and to be able to help in even a small way to see the interest in African violets and AVSA continue and to grow.



Lynn Lombard

I now live in Spokane, Washington, after having lived most of my life in California. I've been an AVSA member since 1977, am a Life Member, Senior Judge, and own and operate The Velvet Leaf. My husband and I, with the help of dedicated committee members, computerized the *MVL* in 1990. I currently serve on the Commercial, Convention, and Plant Registration Committees.

Since my first convention in 1978, I've missed only two. For the past several years, one of my favorite activities at convention, besides seeing long-time friends again, is welcoming everyone into the commercial sales room!

I still belong to two affiliates in Northern California and have served in many capacities for those clubs and the regional organization. After we get our home built, I hope to start an affiliate in Spokane. I also do speaking engagements on AV and gesneriad culture and at one time I grew nearly 3,000 violets in the house.

A UCLA graduate, I taught junior and senior high school for almost 30 years. We share our home with two large dogs and a smaller, more sensibly-sized violet and gesneriad collection.

Being nominated as a Director is an honor, and if elected, I look forward to serving AVSA in this capacity.

FOLIAR FEEDING

By Maria Newhouse

Foliar feeding is a technique of feeding plants by liquid fertilizer directly to their leaves. Plants are able to absorb essential elements through their leaves. The absorption takes place through their stomata and also through their epidermis.

Tests have shown that foliar feeding can be eight to ten times more effective than soil feeding. Up to 90% of foliar-fed solutions can be found in the roots of a plant within one hour of application.

Spraying foliage with liquid nutrients can produce remarkable yields, just as spraying plants with a non-selective herbicide like Roundup will kill the plants down to the roots. The leaves are a very effective transport mechanism for both nutrients and poison. Foliar feeding is especially useful in delivering nutrients that don't move from one part of the plant to another well.

Phosphorous and iron are two examples of this. By foliar feeding, these nutrients are available to new growth much more quickly. Foliar feeding may seem to go against long-standing garden practices of never allowing the leaves to get wet, particularly on some plants like African violets or tomatoes. But because foliar feeding is done with a fine mist and in the morning, which allows leaves to dry, the benefits far outweigh any potential risks.

Foliar feeding is not a substitute for root feeding, but used in conjunction with root feeding, foliar feeding can increase its effectiveness. By applying a foliar fertilizer directly to the leaf, it increases the activity in the leaf, at the same time increasing chlorophyll and thus photosynthesis.

I foliar feed my African violets and even the Streptocarpus in the weeks that I use a bloom booster. Using a fertilizer that is high in nitrogen. Spray the underside first, then mist the top of the plant. Beware of powdery mildew in cold weather. Foliar feed when plants are reasonably warm. Our room temperature is usually around 64°F to 68°F (18° to 20°C). Test the water by spraying it on your wrist to make sure it is warm when sprayed at a distance of about 8" to 12" (20 to 30 cm).

From the Newsletter of the Early Morn AV Group, Inc. Australia

The Adventure of a Book: Part 2

By Francine Pilon

(Part 1 appeared in the May/June 2015 AVM)

Toward the beginning of 2007, steadier correspondences with Dr. Smith began, he sent me some of his personal notes on the species and their history. Among this material were details of the Mather and Uppsala collections. I was amazed to read the story of this lady named Sylva Mather, Nairobi, Kenya. Plants from her collection were collected personally by Mrs. Mather, or were obtained from other collectors or fans in Africa. Some were also obtained by exchange with the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew.

The first goal of Mrs. Mather was to maintain a collection of species as complete as possible. She was very aware of the conservation role that collections bring and of the precarious position of species of the genus *Saintpaulia* due to encroachment on their natural habitat.

In an article written by Mrs. Mather in AVM *Saintpaulia Species In Jeopardy* (May June 1987, p.30-31), she stated:

" So, the purpose of this article is not only to tell you of the present plight of the wild species, but to urge you most strongly to keep them going there and elsewhere, and to do all you can you to keep them there and elsewhere, and do everything you can to encourage others to grow them, too.

Soon all that may be left of these little treasures will be those growing around the world in private collections, botanical gardens, and in the few commercial nurseries that offer them for sale.

Sad as this reflection may be, at least they will then be preserved for posterity, and not become completely extinct and lost to us forever. "

I immediately remember the arguments that I used with a contact at the beginning of my research. This person told me: "Everything is played on the field. That even with the best efforts, someone like me would never make a difference in saving these plants only by cultivating them on the windowsill on the other side of the planet." What I retorted with great conviction at the time, although I was a novice in the circle: "When men who have the power to preserve or destroy these forests have finally completed their destruction, those who have worked hard on the field to safeguard these valuable areas are likely to be happy to know that there are still some of these wild plants on the windowsills, somewhere on the planet." My words, probably crude to the ears of this man, had the effect of making him change his way of seeing things, because two days later, he wrote again to tell me that my arguments had made him realize something. That no matter how small the effort, it remains crucial to the survival of these magnificent endangered plants.

The analogy between the comments of Ms. Mather and mine ten years later provoked in me an incredible energy and enthusiasm to continue my research in order to complete this book. The analogy between her comments and mine was for me a strange coincidence. Throughout my research work, of course I faced some negative comments encouraging me to drop my project, simply because of a refusal or some unanswered correspondence. It was a sign for me. A lady whose existence I knew nothing about until then, had previously struggled with the same arguments for the preservation of this little plant.

Unfortunately, in Dr. Smith's notes, it was mentioned that Mrs. Mather lost her life in a tragic car accident in 1992, the same year that I started to get interested in the genus *Saintpaulia*. That was the second strange coincidence in this story. Mrs. Mather became unwittingly a sort of mentor for my book and me.

I was about to send the book to the presses when I suddenly realized that I really needed a picture of this lady in my book. I therefore delayed the printing and went back to my digs. I again contacted Dr. Smith to ask if he had, by chance, a photo of Ms. Mather or if he knew someone who had one. He told me that the only

person who might have this precious photo had to be none other than Ms. Robertson, the person whose name was given to a species of this genus. Ms. Robertson and Ms. Mather were great friends. So I contacted the National Museum of Kenya to try to get hold of Ms. Robertson, at least to find any address. I managed to get it and sent a letter to Ms. Robertson explaining my request. After several weeks without news, I reconnected with the National Museum of Kenya to try to get a phone number. Success!

There are moments in life when one has no choice but to believe that what we call "providence" exists. The day I contacted Ms. Robertson by phone, she told me that Mrs. Mather's daughters were visiting her and she had given them my letter. Mrs. Mather's daughters had promised to contact me as soon as they returned from their vacation. That was another highlight of fourteen years of research, and the third strange coincidence. While I had no idea if Mrs. Mather had children, what are the chances that I would come across two of them during a phone call with one of their friends in Kenya?

Just a few days later, two daughters of Ms. Mather, Annie and Caroline, sent me two beautiful photos of their mother. One of these pictures was taken in their home, and the other at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew. It was a moment full of emotions to finally put a face to the lady who gave me wings to finish my book. Adding one of these two pictures of Ms. Mather was the last magic touch added to my book after all these years of work. I thank the Mather family for allowing me to finish my book this way. After all these strange coincidences, I could only dedicate my book to this great lady who was such an inspiration for me.

Once the book was published in French, I was still fortunate to be surrounded once more by exceptional people who had to bear with me on this long journey of translating the book into English. It took nearly two years of work to produce this new version. I would like to thank the people without whom this second portion of this great project would not have been possible. Monique Laviolette who has provided me endless encouragement, especially in the most painful moments. Barbara Thorpe who brought a touch of delicacy in this process, and Dorothy Laidlaw.

Francine Pilon
Author of the book *Saintpaulia, the History and Origins of African Violets*
Original French version published in April 2010
English version published in May 2012
For more information or to purchase the book, visit the website at the following address:
http://www.saintpaulia2010.org/
To reach the author:
Saintpaulia2010@videotron.ca

Starting Leaves in Potting Mix

By Joyce Stork

When starting African violet leaves in potting mix, it is best if the potting mix is very light and fluffy, perhaps half vermiculite. Using this mix allows the roots to develop more freely. You also should not set the leaves into the potting mix very deeply, since the plantlets will grow from the cut end of the stem. Setting it in shallowly (just enough to keep it in the mix) makes a much shorter trip for the little plants to grow before they reach the light. If your 'mother' leaves continue to be firm and healthy, they are almost certainly rooting and will ultimately produce offspring. You can also speed up the process of propagation by trimming about an inch off the tip of each 'mother' leaf (using a knife to slice it off). This seems to stimulate the production of plantlets and also increases the amount of light that reaches the soil where they are forming. For more details about soil propagation see the article on propagation on the AVSA web site, www.avsa.org.

SOUTHWEST NATIVE AMERICAN SILVER JEWELRY

By Ann L. Jones • Photos by Taraskye

In the white light of the full moon
At the edge of a canyon
Far from the villages and towns
Close your eyes! Be still!

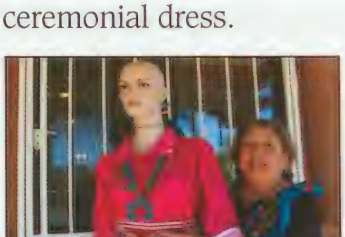
As the breeze whispers through
The aspens and sage
Listen! Listen closely!
The sound of the Kokopelli

Silence is absolute, broken only by the occasional low frequency, high-pitched sound of the coyote. Brilliant stars glow against the dark velvet sky. Moonlight creates long intertwining shadows as it flows among the wild shrubs and weeds in the fields. This is nature, unspoiled by the lights, neon signs, and sounds of the city. This is the land where legends, traditions, and stories are passed from generation to generation. This is the home of the Native American in the Land of Enchantment.

The Kokopelli is known among the Southwestern Native Americans as a prankster, symbol of happiness, joy, fertility in abundant crops, hunting, and procreation. Images of Kokopelli, the flute player, appear on the petroglyphs carved over 400 years ago, and on pottery dated around 750 AD to 1300 AD. It was believed that the Kokopelli could call the clouds and make the wind talk. The Kokopelli is greatly revered by many Southwestern Native Americans. This reverence can be seen by their frequent use of the Kokopelli image in their art, particularly their jewelry (also on pottery, paintings, kachina dolls, etc.).

Kokopelli Tile-Nanas Gift Shop

As I entered Nana's Gift Shop where I was to meet with Vernon Jojola, artisan from Isleta Pueblo, I noticed an image of Kokopelli on a ceramic tile on the side of the doorway and on the wrought iron window guards. Martha Madrid, owner of the shop, was placing a squash blossom necklace and a woven belt recently brought in by a Navajo craftsman on a manikin displaying traditional ceremonial dress.



Nanas Gift Shop - Owner Martha Madrid

Vernon had arrived earlier and was waiting with some of his tools and small pieces of silver sheets on the table. He explained that the silver work he does is overlay. He cuts intricate designs and the shape, solders it to an identical blank, oxidizes, and polishes it. The oxidation remains in the cut design. He added, "Before I cut the silver, I ask for guidance to bring out the beauty and the spirit of the piece."

To my question about what inspires his designs he said, "Traditions, the past, legends, beliefs, and nature." He held up a round pendant he calls "Life Eternal," which he recently completed. He explained that the stone represents the sun, the feathers are the rays. Together they bring light and life to all."

Jewelry has been part of the Native American

Pendant Life Eternal

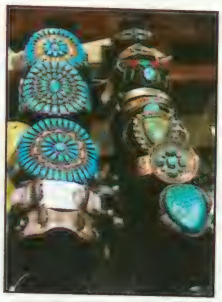
culture for thousands of years. Beaded items were found at archaeology sites in Arizona dating back to 200 BC. The use of silver and metals in jewelry by the Native Americans in the Southwest was introduced to the Navajos by the Spanish in the late nineteenth century. Later it was introduced to the Zuni, Hopi, Acoma, Laguna, and Isleta Pueblos. Spanish and United States silver coins were melted down to use in the jewelry. The United States Government passed a law prohibiting melting coins in 1890, however, it was difficult to enforce. At the end of the nineteenth century, turquoise settings were used in both the Navajo and Zuni jewelry. The Zuni used more stones while the Navajo used turquoise only to embellish the silver.

Jewelry was made by the Native Americans for their own use, or trade between the tribes. Navajos crafted heavy ornate pieces indicating wealth. In the early 1900s some owners pawned their jewelry at local trading posts when it was not in use for tribal ceremonies or other public events. The pawned jewelry was used as security to borrow against for food and other items. It was redeemed when another event was scheduled and when it was over, the jewelry was pawned once again.

Palms Trading Co.

Occasionally, the pawned jewelry was not redeemed, but subsequently sold to "Anglos." Those pieces, known as "Old Pawn" attracted the interest of collectors and many are now valued at thousands of dollars. Jewelry made prior to 1900 is usually the most expensive. Quality items made between 1870 and 1940 are best from an investment perspective. Value is added if a pawn ticket is attached. The Palms Trading Company in Albuquerque sells both contemporary and vintage Native American jewelry.

The increase of tourism to the Southwest in the early 1900's created interest, as well as changes in Native American jewelry. Traders saw the business



Vintage Native American Jewelry - Palms Trading Co.

potential in the jewelry, however, it was too heavy and expensive for numerous sales. Initially, traders bought small, less expensive pieces, for resale to the tourist. Finding it a lucrative business, the Anglos hired Native American artisans to make the less expensive, lighter items on a "production" basis. Though the artisans were often highly skilled, they were limited by cost and production time. Silver was supplied in sheets, stones precut, with bracelets and rings preformed.

Fred Harvey Museum

The Fred Harvey Company operated restaurants, hotels, and souvenir shops near the Santa Fe railroad stations. These businesses became known for the young ladies known as "the Harvey girls," who sold this lighter production jewelry, as well as high quality Native American jewelry in their souvenir shops. To qualify to be a Harvey Girl, the young ladies had to have at least an eighth grade education, good communication skills, good manners, commit for six months, and promise not to marry during their employment. They were housed on the premises. (Fred Harvey jewelry, both quality, and the lighter items, are now valued by collectors.)

The Fred Harvey Museum in Belen (about thirty miles south of Albuquerque) includes displays of traditional Native American jewelry, as well as both Harvey House and Santa Fe Railroad memorabilia. Available tours include the M1990 locomotives, one of the few remaining ones in the United States, the Harvey House and Harvey Girls, Paranormal, and History of the Railroad in Belen. There is no admission fee for visiting the museum.

Zuni Sun Face Bolo Tie

The Great Depression affected the interest in Southwest silver and turquoise jewelry. Still, the Native

American artisans continued to craft jewelry for their own use, and created innovations in design. The Zunis, for example, developed a mosaic method in which turquoise, coral, shell, other stones and materials, were placed stone to stone forming images of Kachinas, etc. In the 1940s, artisans on the Zuni reservation developed a channel technique where strips of silver separated the stones. Following World War II, they developed another technique, needlepoint or petit point, using tiny stones placed in individual bezels to create designs. Later in the century, the Hopi silversmiths developed the overlay method.

Interest in Native American jewelry was revived in the 1970s. Publications including *Newsweek, Arizona Highways*, and the *Wall Street Journal,* featured articles about the silver and turquoise jewelry made by the Native Americans.

Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City had a fashion show on Native American jewelry. The squash blossom necklace and bolo tie were particularly popular and admired. The Squash blossom had been adapted from the Spanish silver ornament, the pomegranate in the late 19th century. Pomegranates do not grow in Southwestern United States, but squash was an important crop, thus the design was renamed. The horseshoe shaped pendant on the squash blossom necklace was adapted from the bridle ornament used for centuries by the Europeans. Though it was initially used on the bridles when first introduced to the Native Americans, by the end of the 19th Century it was commonly associated with the Squash Blossom Necklace. At first, the necklaces were made of solid silver. Later, the Zuni artisans followed by the Navajos, added turquoise.

There are fewer silversmiths in the Pueblos today. Other lucrative employment opportunities, such as industry, near the reservations are available. However, many creative and talented Native American silversmiths continue to craft quality artistic items. The influence of costume jewelry is seen in some of the pieces. For example, pearls and gems not used in the past, are now seen in some of the creations.

Interest in Southwestern Native American silver and turquoise jewelry has increased in the last twenty-five years. Both old and contemporary jewelry is popular for personal use, as well as collecting.

Explore the fascinating colorful world of Native American Jewelry when attending the 2016 African Violet Society National Convention in the Land of Enchantment!

Q & A

From the Newsletter of the Early Morn AV Group, Inc. • Australia

Why do the leaves on my African violet turn down and hug the pot?

If your plant is growing in cold conditions, this can happen. African violets prefer a temperature of 15–20 degrees Celsius (59°-68°F). If necessary, move your plant to a warmer position. Another reason could be that you are using too much fertilizer. Use only 1/8th of a teaspoon per two liters of water for wick watering. I have noticed that light green leaves are affected more easily by cold conditions, and too much fertilizer. If you grow under lights, move your plant lower as too much light could cause this problem too.

What differences are seen between too much light and not enough?

Leaves that need more light will have longer petioles, smaller leaves, and will probably stretch up to the light source rather than lying in a flat symmetrical pattern. If there is too much light, the leaves may look bleached, or burned, with the center looking tightly compacted.

Can the same thickness of wick be used for standards, trailers, semi-minis and minis? Or should a thicker ply yarn be used for the larger and a thinner ply for the smaller plants?

8 ply acrylic yarn can be used for all plants. You can use more than one wick for the larger plants. Some people use a 4 ply yarn for small plants. Trailers need more water, so a thicker wick may be used. Some people use pantyhose cut into strips for wicks, varying the thickness according to requirements.

COMING EVENTS

February 20 – ARIZONA
Desert Sun AV & Gesneriad Society of Phoenix
Annual Show/Sale
Feb 20, 2016
Valley Garden Center
1809 North 15th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85007
(1 block N. of McDowell Rd.)
Sale: 10 am - 4 pm
Show: 11 am - 4 pm
Contact: email: anncie@cox.net
(623) 398-8133

February 27 - OKLAHOMA
AVS of Greater Tulsa
Annual Judged Show/Sale
Tulsa Garden Center
2435 S. Peoria Ave
Tulsa, Ok
Saturday, Feb 27, 2016
9am - 3 pm
Info: John Carter
johntcarter@valornet.com
918-355-8020

March 4 & 5 – FLORIDA
CFAVS Annual Show and Sale
Beardall Senior Center
800 Delaney Avenue
Orlando, Florida 32801
Friday, March 4, 2016 noon to 4 pm
Saturday, March 5, 2016 10 am to 4 pm
Sale Room opens at 10 am both days
Info: Linda Price, laprice41@yahoo.com
(407) 462-5923

March 12 - OREGON
Portlandia Violet Club
Portland Nursery
9000 S E Division
Hours 10 am to 3 pm
African Violet Sale, Display, Demonstrations
African violets and other related plants
Info: (503) 761-7861

AVSA – Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner, Chairman • 35 Ridge Point Dr. • Chesterfield, MO 63017
1 October 2015 to 30 November 2015

Two-tone
AVC of Greater Kansas City/MO
Sharon Shannon
Jean Meyer
Columbus AVS/Ohio

Multicolor
Billings Bloomers AVS/Montana

Geneva
Ohio State AVS

TOTALS $230.00

Kent Stork's Method of Hitting Full Bloom on the Day of the Show

Growing to Show is easy, right? Just follow the schedule for disbudding that is described in Pauline Bartholomew's book Growing For Show. It works great, theoretically, but climate conditions can wreck the schedule. If it gets hot, violets bloom out considerably faster. What can a grower do if the temperatures rise during the eight weeks from the end of disbudding to the day of the show? What if the estimate of how long it will take from final disbud to open flowers was wrong?

One of the least understood processes of growing championship African violets is how to keep the plants from coming into bloom too early. A show grower wants his violets to be in maximum bloom on the day of judging with every flower fresh and strong. To be successful, a grower must factor in 1) how long a stem of flowers takes to open all of its flowers, and 2) how long a flower will remain fresh once it is open. Let's look at those one at a time.

1. How long does it take a normal* bud stem to open all of its flowers? From the time that single or semidouble buds push through the leaves, it will take about four weeks for the stem to open all of its flowers. Normally the first flower open will be fading by the time the last flower opens. Bud stems which emerge above the foliage before the four week mark will not have fresh flowers on the day of the show. Removing it at this point will encourage new bud stems to form at the base, and it's possible those flowers will be open by show. For best results, trim this stem with a small scissors to encourage a new stem to appear right below it in the same location.

Kent's Rule #1: At four weeks before show, any normal bud stem that has pushed through (and has all buds standing above the leaves) should be removed entirely.

2. How long will normal flowers remain fresh once open? Most single and semidouble blossoms will not remain fresh enough to travel to show for more than two weeks.If the flowers open earlier than two weeks before the show, they may be on the verge of fading and needing to be removed during grooming, especially if they must travel some distance to the show location.

Kent's Rule #2: Up until two weeks before the show, any normal flower which is fully open should be trimmed off. Be sure to leave no stubs on the pedicel. This is the process Kent calls "de-blooming."

Follow these two rules, and you'll rarely find yourself crying that the violets came into bloom too early.

That solves the problem of blooming too early. Now what if they aren't blooming fast enough? That's another article!

*For this discussion, a *normal* flower is one that is single or semi-double and grows on a plant with green foliage. Violets with variegated foliage, double or green flowers, or are slow-growing cultivars may take longer than described above. Only experience will tell you how to grow these.

Three Weeks to Show

Buds are emerging above the leaves. Any flowers which have opened early have been removed. If a bud stem had been standing above the leaves a week earlier, the whole bud stem would have been removed.

Two Weeks to Show

A number of blossoms are open. All of these individual open flowers will be removed since they probably won't be fresh enough in two weeks to survive the traveling.

One Week to Show

Flowers are opening steadily each day, and it is enjoyable to watch it happen.

One Day to Show

In nearly full bloom (with only a few buds left to open, they are going into the box to travel. The box will be covered to maintain humidity during the 450 mile drive to the show. Looking good!

Tally Time 2015

www.avsa.org/tallytime • **Susan Anderson** • 4040 E. Maldonado Dr. • Phoenix, AZ 85042 • tallytime@avsa.org

Tally Time is a summary of the African violet varieties and species receiving the greatest number of awards in AVSA Standard Shows throughout the past year. I am pleased to present the 2015 annual report. This year's report summarizes results of 63 shows, across six geographic regions. Use this report to learn which plants grow well in your area and are known to bring home top awards.

The winners this past year have included many well-known favorites and also several newcomers. Each would make a fabulous addition to your collection.

In 2015, there was a marked increase in winning species. Almost one third of all shows awarded an AVSA Collection rosette for a Species collection. That's incredible!

Thanks to all participating affiliates for their timely submissions of reports. Special thanks to those clubs that made their submission via the online Tally Time form, available on the AVSA website (www.avsa.org/tallytime). It saves time and postage! To have show winners included in the annual summary, please send completed Tally Time forms via online entry, mail or email by November 20th. Enjoy growing and showing!

	Total Number of Awards	Number Best In Show	Number Second Best	Variety, Hybridizer, Registration No.	Number of Collection Awards	Best Standard, Semi, Mini, Trailer or Species
STANDARDS	14	3	2	**Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler** P. Hancock #8745	6	3
	7	2	0	**Tiger** I. Fredette #3433	3	2
	7	1	1	**Taffeta Blue** Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano #9961	3	2
	7	1	0	**Frozen in Time** Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano #9167	4	2
	7	1	0	**Jersey Snow Flakes** R. Kurzynski #9820	5	1
	7	0	0	**Buckeye Nostalgia** P. Hancock #10484	6	1
SEMIMINIATURES	11	1	1	**Ness' Crinkle Blue** D. Ness #8136	4	5
	6	1	0	**Mac's Misty Meadow** G. McDonald #10153	2	3
	6	0	0	**Jolly Dear** H. Pittman #9713	4	2
	5	1	1	**Rob's Slap Happy** R. Robinson #9040	1	2
	5	0	1	**Cajun's Lil Sprinkles** B. Thibodeaux #10642	3	1
	5	0	1	**Jolly Frills** H. Pittman #9907	3	1
MINIATURES	9	1	0	**Precious Red** H. Pittman #9724	2	6
	9	0	2	**Rob's Chilly Willy** R. Robinson #9461	3	4
	8	2	0	**Jolly Orchid** H. Pittman #9719	2	4
	7	1	0	**Orchard's Bumble Magnet** R. Wilson #8479	3	3
	5	0	1	**Frosted Denim** S. Sorano #8513	1	3
TRAILERS	11	1	1	**Rob's Boolaroo** R. Robinson #8053	1	8
	8	2	0	**Rob's Gundaroo** R. Robinson #9294	2	4
	4	1	0	**Pixie Blue** L. Lyon #2598	0	3
	3	0	0	**Cirelda** P. Tracey #3620	1	2
	3	0	0	**Cajun's McKenna Trail** B. Thibodeaux #10423	1	2
SPECIES	23	1	1	**S 5c1 clone *ionantha***	10	11
	12	2	0	**S 5b clone *grotei* Silvert**	6	4
	8	1	0	**S 5a clone *grandifolia* No. 237**	4	3
	8	0	0	**S 8 clone *rupicola***	4	4
	8	0	0	**S 5b clone *confusa***	5	3

The following table lists the award winners by geographic region.

	Variety	Total Number of Awards	Geographic Regions I	II	III	IV	V	VI
STANDARDS	Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler	14	1	4	5	-	4	-
	Tiger	7	-	-	2	-	5	-
	Taffeta Blue	7	-	-	7	-	-	-
	Frozen in Time	7	-	1	4	-	2	-
	Jersey Snow Flakes	7	2	3	1	1	-	-
	Buckeye Nostalgia	7	1	2	2	-	2	-
SEMIMINIATURES	Ness' Crinkle Blue	11	1	5	2	2	1	-
	Mac's Misty Meadow	6	-	1	3	1	-	1
	Jolly Dear	6	-	4	-	-	1	1
	Rob's Slap Happy	5	2	-	-	3	-	-
	Cajun's Lil Sprinkles	5	-	5	-	-	-	-
	Jolly Frills	5	2	1	2	-	-	-
MINIATURES	Precious Red	9	2	2	2	3	-	-
	Rob's Chilly Willy	9	4	-	5	-	-	-
	Jolly Orchid	8	-	5	-	3	-	-
	Orchard's Bumble Magnet	7	-	1	5	-	1	-
	Frosted Denim	5	-	3	1	-	1	-
TRAILERS	Rob's Boolaroo	11	-	1	6	3	-	1
	Rob's Gundaroo	8	2	-	4	-	2	-
	Pixie Blue	4	-	1	3	-	-	-
	Cirelda	3	-	2	1	-	-	-
	Cajun's McKenna Trail	3	-	1	-	-	2	-
SPECIES	S 5c1 clone *ionantha*	23	4	5	12	1	-	1
	S 5b clone *grotei* Silvert	12	2	3	6	-	1	-
	S 5a clone *grandifolia* No. 237	8	2	-	6	-	-	-
	S 8 clone *rupicola*	8	1	2	-	1	2	2
	S 5b clone *confusa*	8	1	3	3	-	1	-
	Number of Winners	213	27	55	82	18	25	6
	Number of Shows Reported	63	8	14	21	6	10	4

Geographic Region: State/Province (Number of Shows)

Region I: Arizona (2), California (5), New Mexico (1)
Region II: Iowa (2), Minnesota (2), Missouri (4), Nebraska (1), Ohio (3), Wisconsin (2)
Region III: Connecticut (3), Delaware (1), Maryland (1), Massachusetts (1), New Jersey (4), New York (7), Pennsylvania (2), Virginia (2)
Region IV: Louisiana (1), Texas (5)
Region V: Florida (8), Georgia (1), Tennessee (1)
Region VI: Alberta (1), Nova Scotia (1), Ontario (2)

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Cajun Blue Bayou

Exhibited & Hybridized by: *Belinda Thibodeaux*

Standard

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Rob's Vanilla Trail

Exhibited by: *Sherry Savar*

Hybridized by: *R. Robinson*

Semiminiature Trailer

Registration for Judging School for Students and Certificate Renewals at the Albuquerque Convention

An AVSA judging school will be held on Wednesday, June 1, 2016, for AVSA members who wish to take their first judge's school and for judges who wish to renew their certificates. The lecture will be from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon and must be attended in order to take the exam. The test begins at 2:00 p.m. The registration fee is $10.00 payable to AVSA. **AVSA membership cards must be presented at the door. Proof of three blue ribbons is required to take the test but not to audit the school.**

Name _____
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Address _____
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Pat Hancock will be the teacher. Copy, complete and email (preferred) or snail mail the form (do not send payment) to Pat's assistant: Karen Cenci, 6070 Bridgehaven Dr., Milford, Ohio 45150; Phone: 513-325-0395; email: kcenci@hotmail.com

The registration fee of **$10.00** applies to all who attend the judging school to take the test or to audit the class. Your **check needs to be sent to the AVSA Office, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702. Please note on your check that this fee is for the judging school in Albuquerque.**

The test will be based on the latest edition of the AVSA Handbook, 12th Edition, revised in 2011, plus any updates.

Registration and payment for the judging school must be received by April 29, 2016.

From The AVSA Website FAQs - Blooming

By Joyce Stork

Q: I have an African violet chimera that used to "bloom true" but now it is not. Do you have any reason why and will it bloom true again?

A: Chimera African violets can be free sporting which means that they mutate easily. Stress factors such as uneven cultural conditions, age, or even electrical currents seem to affect African violets and result in sporting. Occasionally just a single leaf will sport and throw a solid blossom, while other leaves will continue to bloom true. When that happens, it is wise to take a blossom stem to propagate so that you can keep the original chimera traits. If it has been blooming incorrectly for several months, from all parts of the plant, it is safe to assume that the chimera trait is lost and it will not be likely to reappear.

For those of you that are planning to attend the AVSA Convention and Show in Albuquerque, NM, May 29 - June 5, 2016, Registration Information should be available on the AVSA website *(www.avsa.org)* after the first of the year. If you do not have access to a computer, please call the office (844) 400-AVSA (2872) and I will mail you a packet. I am looking forward to seeing all of you there! For more information visit <http://avsa.org/conventions-2016>

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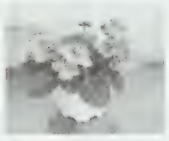

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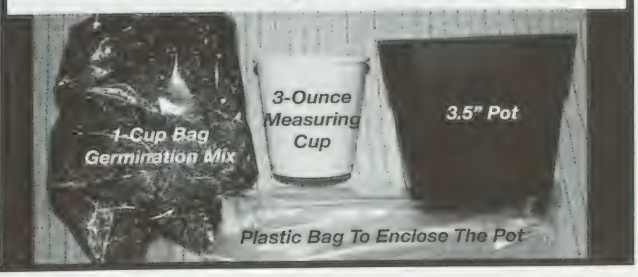

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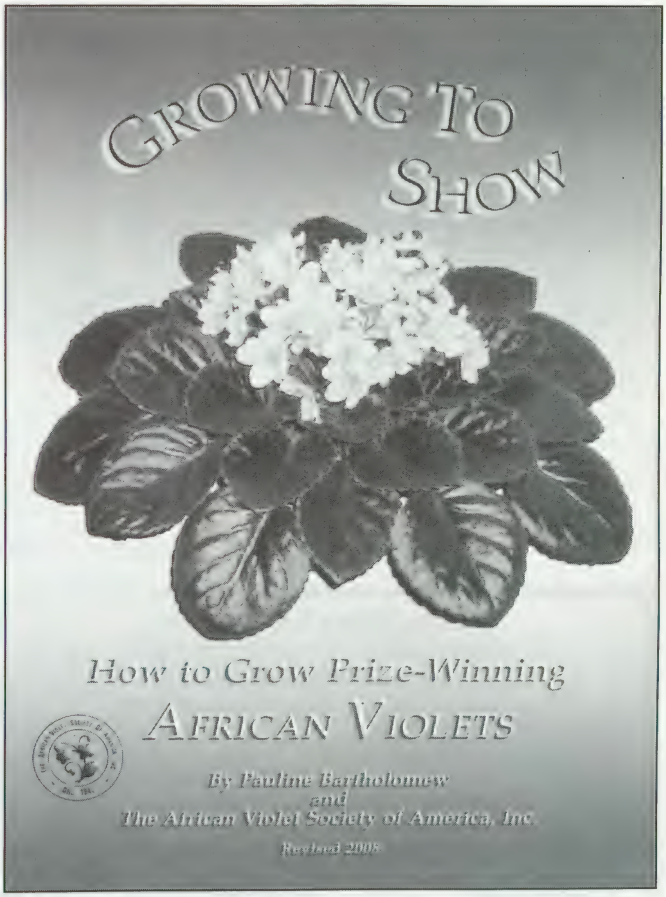

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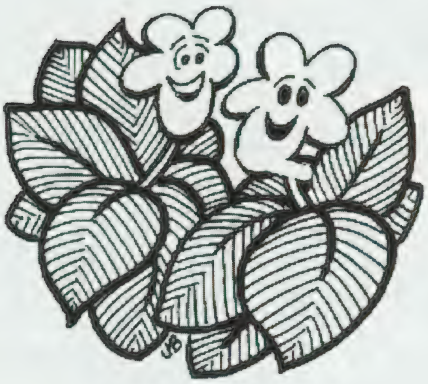

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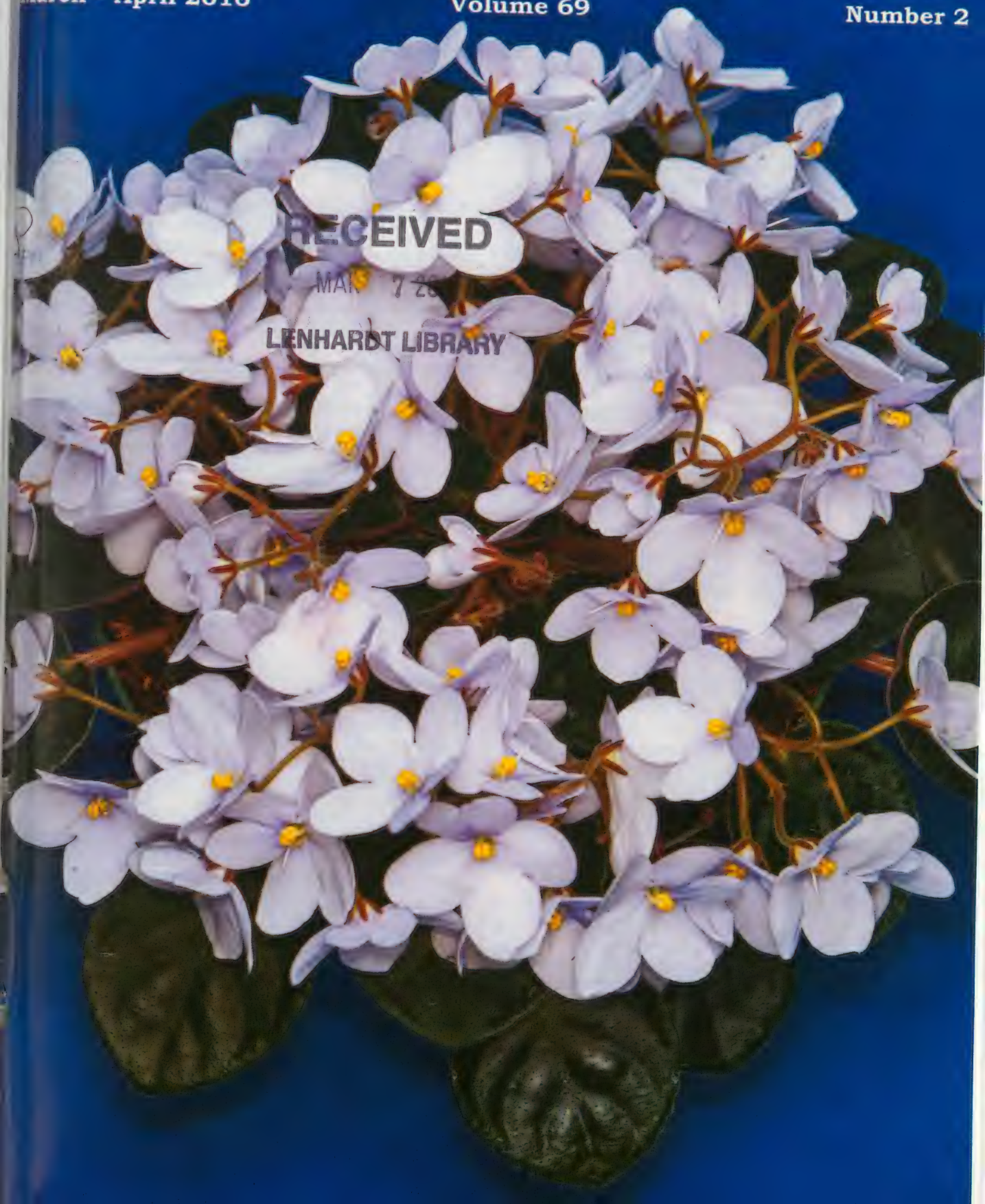
March • April 2016 Volume 69 Number 2



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CONVENTION PROGRAM: Send special requests for workshop programs or interesting speakers to Kathy Lahti, Convention Director, 4157 Oliver Ave. N.W., Annandale, MN 55302, *Email* <lahti@lakedalelink.net> If interested in sponsoring a national convention in your area, contact Convention Director.

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ARTICLES BY MEMBERS, COLUMNISTS AND MEMORIALS: Send to Editor.

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COMING EVENTS: Send to Editor.

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African Violet

March • April Volume 69 Number 2

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On this cover:

S.5c2 clone diplotricha 'Parker'

Exhibited by: **Bill Price**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

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OFFICERS

Winston J. Goretsky, President
32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada T3L 2B2
email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Dr. Richard Nicholas, 1st Vice President
3113 Deerfield Dr., Denton, TX 76208
email: randanicho@aol.com

Sue Ramser, 2nd Vice President
2413 Martin, Wichita Falls, TX 76308
email: ramserwf@wf.net

Susan Anderson, 3rd Vice President
4040 E. Maldonado Dr., Phoenix AZ 85042
email: sanderson122@cox.net

Edna Rourke, Treasurer
99 Old Stratford Rd., Shelton, CT 06484
email: APapillion@aol.com

Mary Corondan, Secretary
434 Plumwood Way, McKinny, TX 75069
email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

John Carter, Immediate Past President
1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012
email: johntcarter@valornet.com

STAFF

Ruth Rumsey, Editor
2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702
email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Cindi Nofziger, Advertising Manager
1035 Lakewood Dr., Albany, OR 97321
email: ccnofziger@comcast.net

Lynne Wilson, Publications Chairman
645 Hudson Ave., Tampa, FL 33606
email: wilsonav@tampabay.rr.com

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

Greetings everyone!

My local affiliate, the Stampede City African Violet Society, is hosting the Canadian National Convention in Calgary, Alberta this Spring (May 10-14, 2016) and I've been in overdrive mode preparing for this event.

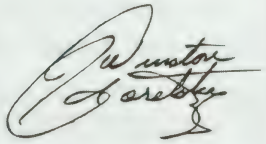
Over the past year, I've attended several shows and conventions and gathered leaf cuttings from many sources. They have all produced numerous baby plants and I've been busy separating them and planting them on. I don't know how many hundreds of pots I now have, but I know that in a few months, I'll be completely out of space in my growing area and there will be an explosion of plants that I'm not going to be able to manage.

It always seems like such a good idea to pot up every plant that is produced from a leaf cutting, as it's such a shame to throw out anything that might produce a good plant. This is a recipe for disaster, as I've grown to recognize the repeated pattern. It's sometimes hard for us to follow our own advice. ***"Only grow the number of plants that you can easily manage, or you'll become overwhelmed with such a volume, that you'll struggle to grow any of them really well."***

We always seem to bite off more than we can chew. This is true for many of us who haven't learned the lesson, or are continually in denial. Growing African violets, or any plants for that matter, is meant to be a pleasurable activity. When we get to a point where we can't enjoy a vacation away from home, or need to plan elaborate maintenance programs and schedules to manage our obsession, then we may not be enjoying ourselves as much as we hoped.

Unless you're a commercial grower, a happy middle ground is somewhere I think we all strive to achieve. Growing enough plants that you have a good selection of viable show plants and enough space that they can all grow to reach their full potential. This is my hope. I love to try and grow as many of the new varieties as I can, but I get out of control far too easily. Try to designate an area of plants selected for show, over which you will provide exceptional care. At least this way, if you have to neglect some of your plants because of time constraints or schedules, you'll know which ones to ensure get the most care above the others. It's not an ideal solution, but it helps us cope through those times when we think we're over our head in deep water.

I hope you're all getting excited about springtime events with your local clubs and we'd all like to see each other at convention too, so I hope you've already made plans to attend or will consider doing so soon. Use the AVSA website or African Violet Magazine to find events that might be nearby or fall within your travel plans. It's always fun to include a visit to a show away from home or even while on vacation.



Winston

Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Our AVSA convention is right around the corner, and from what I've been hearing, everyone is excited about going to Albuquerque, New Mexico. On pages 20 and 21 in this issue are several lovely photos of Albuquerque, Courtesy of the Albuquerque Visitor's and Convention Bureau.

At the bottom of this page you'll see our Auction Chairman, **Edna Rourke's** reminder of the auction, and an appeal for auction items. This will be our eighteenth Luncheon Auction! This event is so much fun, and there are always wonderful items to bid on.

I've heard that some members aren't pleased that I often reprint from other African violet/Gesneriad publications. I am grateful that those who produce those publications are so generous. It would be different if more our very knowledge members would submit articles for publication in the AVM; which was something our members usually did in the past.

My dear friend, **Pat Hancock**, came up with this fantastic contest idea to encourage our members to write! Here are the prizes:

3rd Place Winner will receive a total of **eight** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

2nd Place Winner will receive a total of **sixteen** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

1st Place Winner will receive a total of **thirty-two** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **Contest Rules** are as follows:

1. ALL entered articles must be Original Work, and cannot have been published before
2. You may write as many articles as you wish, and each entry must be marked, **CONTEST.**
3. **Submissions must be received *AFTER March 1, 2016.***
4. **Cutoff date for entries is *April 1, 2017. Articles received after this date will NOT be considered.***
5. Hybridizers, Commercial Members, and Judges, taking part, are not eligible to receive prizes.
6. The decisions of the Judges will be FINAL.
7. Due to the high cost of shipping leaves internationally, leaves will only be shipped to winners in the US. International members will be required to pick them up at the 2017 Orlando Convention.

Ruth

Luncheon Auction

By Edna Rourke

Can you believe our AVSA Convention - **"Violets Color the Land of Enchantment"** and the luncheon Auction is almost here? In order to make our 18th auction the best and most successful ever, we need your help and support and I'm sure your help and donations will make it happen. As you know, all monies raised are used to benefit AVSA.

To our many talented members and affiliates, won't you consider donating violet-related items or violet related craft items to the auction? To our hybridizers and commercial members - any donations of newly introduced plants, leaves or cuttings or supplies would be very much appreciated and gratefully accepted.

It's your help and support that insures the success of the auction. All donations and contributors will be acknowledged. Don't forget, you must attend the luncheon in order to participate at the auction. Won't you join us?

Please give me a call at 203-926-9716 or email me at Apapillon@aol.com to let me know what items you will be donating. I look forward to hearing from you.

See you in Albuquerque!

Office Update

By Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: avsa@earthlink.net

It's that time of year again! AVSA's 70th consecutive convention and show will be held May 29 – June 5, 2016, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Albuquerque, NM. There are going to be great tours and presentations. I hope you can get signed up for all.

The Convention Registration and Information is posted on the website at http://avsa.org/conventions-2016. If you are unable to print it out from the website, please give me a call at the office (409) 839-4725 and I will be more than happy to mail you the information. ***Please get your convention registration to the office as soon as possible.*** With me being the only one handling the convention registrations, I really need your help in getting yours in early. This will make it easier for me to prepare for the convention. ***For those of you wanting to sit together at any of the three main meals, your registrations must come in the same envelope. No seating assignments will be accepted after the early cut off date.*** I greatly appreciate your help with this!

Once again, it is very important that your club's information is correct in our records as well as on the AVSA website. I have had many people call trying to find a local club near them and some of the information we have is outdated. Please help us keep that information correct so we can help those wanting to learn more about growing! You can email any changes to avsa@earthlink.net and melsgrice@earthlink.net. Also, for those clubs interested in getting back issues for their shows, we still have plenty available for just the cost of postage which is now $12.65. These are shipped in a medium flat rate box with 20-30 assorted back issues enclosed.

Judges, make sure you are current on your dues. With the spring shows approaching you will want to qualify for Judging.

I hope to see you all in Albuquerque! Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions at all!

Convention Meal Seating

For those of you wanting to sit together at the three main meals, your Registrations must arrive together in the same envelope. No seating assignments will be accepted after the early cut off date. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS.

Senk's Fruit Fly

Exhibited by:
Sayeh Beheshti
Hybridized by:
R. Follett/D. Senk
Miniature Trailer

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Jolly Jubilee

Exhibited by:
Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by:
H. Pittman
Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Rob's Wooloomooloo

Exhibited by: *Mary Jo Bradley*

Hybridized by: *R. Robinson*

Semiminiature Trailer

In Search of New Violets

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

While I dislike giving a product endorsement within this column, I did see a product on Facebook and on the web that may be of interest to many of you who are hybridizing. There have always been problems in getting the pollen out of an African violet anther (yellow pollen sac). The anthers of African violets do not open to release the pollen as occurs in many other plants. Instead there is a tiny pore at the end of the anther where the pollen exits. When bees visit an African violet flower, they vibrate or "buzz" at a particular frequency causing the pollen to vibrate out the pore for easy collection by the bee. In nature, some plants are specific to the frequency of the "buzz" and can only be successfully pollinated by certain kinds of bees. Another example of a "buzz" pollinated plant is the common garden tomato.

In the past, hybridizers have split open the anther with a razor blade or fingernail to get at the pollen. Depending on your agility, this can tricky and frustrating. A product called VegiBee is now available to mimic the "buzz" pollination of bees and release the pollen from anthers. The device is a tapered, wand-shaped instrument with a power source that allows it to vibrate rapidly. When pressed against the anther, the vibrations mimic those of a bee and cause the pollen to be released through the pore. The pollen can be collected on a small black spoon. Once the pollen is released and collected, it is easily visible for transfer to a receptive stigma for pollination. With the use of VegiBee, hybridizers can avoid the frustration of trying to split anthers to obtain pollen.

A couple of comments or suggestions about using this device: Semi-double or double flowers often have highly modified anthers and many are effectively male sterile. If VegiBee does not show any release of pollen, chances are probably good that there isn't any viable pollen to work with. This may take some of the guesswork out of on pollination with these flowers. Remember to clean your collecting spoon thoroughly between pollen collections. Otherwise you may get mixed pollen from several plants in your pollination and be uncertain of the parentage of your seedlings. VegiBee is relatively inexpensive (under $35.00 U.S.) and may make hybridizing African violets (or your tomatoes) much more fun and interesting.

Q: Do you recommend removing the anthers from a flower in order to prevent self-pollination?

A: I have not really found it necessary to remove the anthers from the seed parent plant to prevent self-pollination. Since African violet pollen is not easily released on its own, it's highly unlikely that any pollen would be released and get on the stigma. Having said this, I would be concerned if thrips are about which can release the pollen and cause pollination. (Truth be told, I think many hybridizers got their start from these accidental pollinations, thrip or otherwise, giving them a seed pod to try to grow out.). Removing the stamens could also damage the flower and cause it to abort. You have to have a very fine touch and good agility to remove the anthers and not damage the flower. Therefore, most of the time I doubt that it is worth the effort to remove the anthers.

Q: When making pollination between a semi-double and a double, is there any advantage to using one plant or the other as the seed parent or pollen parent?

A: The answer to this question overlaps with the previous question. The extra petals of a semi-double and double are made by a dominant mutation that converts the stamens to petals. When this occurs, the ability to form a functional anther with viable pollen is greatly reduced. Semi-double plants are the easier plants to get good anthers and viable

pollen compared to double petaled plants. Even still, you may have to examine several flowers to find one with good anthers and pollen. I'd plan on using the semi-double plant as the pollen parent and the double petaled plant as the seed parent.

I would also suggest comparing the first open flower on a bloom stalk to later opening flowers on your semi-double plant. The first open flower often shows more complete petal development and has a higher risk of male sterility. The side flowers don't have as much energy to work with and are more likely to show normal or near normal anthers and pollen. You may have to check several bloom stalks to find a flower with good pollen. A related trick is to partially starve the semi-double plant. Reducing the fertilizer or light often stunts flower development and keeps the semi-double plants from converting stamens to petals. The result is more flowers with normal anthers and pollen.

Q: What would you get if you cross a bell-shaped flower with a wasp-shaped flower?

A: This question came from a discussion on Facebook and involved the collective experience of a number of hybridizers who work with wasp-shaped flowers. Bell-shaped flowers are usually considered to be a dominant trait to other flower shapes. Wasp-shaped flowers are also a dominant trait. A bell flower crossed with a wasp flower could potentially result in a double dominant, a bell-wasp flower. The question was, can these two flower shapes be combined and what would the flower look like?

An answer with photographic evidence was contributed by hybridizer Jeff Jackson. It appears that bell and wasp shapes can be combined together into a single flower. The plant is 'Imp's Billowing Cloak'. (Go to http://www.freewebs.com/creaturegardens/hybridsal.htm for a picture). The overall shape of the flower is radial with the lower part of the petals fused together to make a shallow bell. This is the contribution of the bell-shaped trait. The wasp-shaped trait shows up in the outer halves of the petals. The outer parts of the petals are separate from each other and elongated like fingers, as seen in the wasp-shaped trait. The combined traits seem to produce a kind of nodding bell-shaped flower with elongated petal tips. The bell-wasp flower is visually different from other flowers types and promises some interesting new combinations for hybridizers.

We know that the wasp-shape can be combined with star-shaped flowers to produce a radial shaped flower with petals that are nearly separated all the way to the base. The discussion on Facebook raised the question on if wasp-shaped might need to be redefined. Perhaps what defines a "wasp" is the elongation of the petal edges. When combined with pansy-shaped, wasp produces the flower that most would think of as wasp-shaped. When combined with star-shaped, we get a circular flower with elongated petals that are deeply divided. When combined with bell-shaped, we get a shallow bell with elongated petal edges. It will be interesting to discuss this possible reconsideration of what exactly is a "wasp" flower, perhaps giving hybridizers some new things to try.

Q: I recently saw a picture of Streptocarpus flowers with highly divided and elongated petals. Is this the wasp flower mutation?

A: In the past two weeks I've seen several pictures of some new hybrids from Dale Marten that have elongated petals that are deeply divided. The effect was described by some as reminiscent of a Praying Mantis and does indeed look like the wasp mutation in African violets. Since African violets and *Streptocarpus* are very closely related to each other, it wouldn't be surprising to see mutations found in one plant to show up in the other. Given the amount of intense hybridizing that has been occurring in *Streptocarpus* the last few years, I think we'll see many more examples of familiar African violet mutations showing up in *Streptocarpus.* (Now if we could just get the good yellow coloration of *Streptocarpus* into our African violets.)

A Family Portrait

By Paul Kroll

4325 Two Rod Road • East Aurora, NY 14052
Email: pfkroll@roadrunner.com

Primulina spadiciformis

There are many species and hybrids in the *Primulina* genus. Over the years, I have grown many of them, and most of our AVSA shows have a good number of entries in the *Primulina* class(es). These plants are easy to grow in the same conditions as our African violets. I grow under lights, but several people I know have had wonderful success growing in natural light.

I add horticultural lime to the soil mix for several of my gesneriads; *Primulina* is one of those that like more lime. I do not wick anything, choosing to saucer water, but I know many growers who wick their *Primulina* plants with great success.

Primulina spadiciformis is so named because of its spade-shaped leaves. The foliage on this species is plain green and shiny. It is not eligible to be entered into the class for Ornamental factors other than bloom, since it does not have qualifying ornamental factors in its foliage. However, this plant is – literally – never out of bloom, once mature! It blooms continuously at the end of a two-tube (T8s) fixture.

Another redeeming factor of this plant is that it grows in a whorl, unlike several others of the *Primulina* species and hybrids that have a growth habit of layering their leaves on top of one another. This stacking habit causes the "shaded" leaf to atrophy and die off. Those with this growth habit can never be grown large, as they will only display a certain number of layers of leaves.

Primulina spadiciformis will grow large (approximately 15 to 18 inches in diameter) when it reaches a five-inch pot. The foliage will remain in a very nice, quite symmetrical whorl. I grew my plant to this size for many years, putting it down, as with AVs, by scraping the neck and repotting. I was often complimented when exhibiting this plant on "the way you grow it". Not so! That's the way the plant grew for me; I did nothing special to tweak its habits. Eventually, my plant began to crown sucker and I had to tear it apart. I got six crowns to grow on and hope that I can do so with the same success and enjoyment I got from the original plant.

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

'Petite Blarney'

Exhibited by: *Sue Hoffmann*

Hybridized by: *H. Pittman*

Best Miniature

MAAVS 2015

Question Box

By Bill Price

Email: billprice@telus.net

Q: *Should we change our watering and light methods with the changing of the seasons? One of my older club members, who grows lovely African violets, advised me to do so, but would not go into details. No one else in my club has suggested this.*

A: This is a great question and depends on several things. Firstly, most of us live in the Northern or Southern hemisphere rather than near the equator, where we experience the lengthening and shortening of day length over the year as well as the change in light quality from intense and bright in our summer to less intense in the winter. Naturally, all plants that have evolved in these conditions have adapted to these cycles and often also are triggered to grow and flower seasonally, related to these cycles. African violets have evolved in the equatorial region, which means they receive essentially an even twelve hours of day and night through the year. Light intensity is high, but is ameliorated by the shade of tall trees, resulting in a bright, but diffused light.

What they also experience in nature is a modified dry and wet season. But because of the water retaining properties of the shady mossy substrate that most species grow in, they end up with a fairly even water supply through the year.

As you have probably heard or read, most hobbyists grow their violets under artificial light, most often a two-tube florescent system mounted over a shelf with a timer, held to a fairly even twelve hours of light, followed by a dark period. Now, if the growing area temperatures are even throughout the year, watering requirements would be about the same. However, if temperatures tend to fluctuate, water requirements would tend to be greater when it is warmer and less when cooler. However, lower humidity would also necessitate higher water needs.

Now, if your member may have been referring to growing violets in natural light, with only natural light available, then the plants experience quite a profound variation in light throughout the year and consequently, also growth and flowering variations. In the spring and summer, as the light duration and intensity increase, along with associated higher room temperatures, so will the watering needs.

In the fall and winter however, with shorter days and less intense light, the plants are metabolizing more slowly and less water is needed. Consequently, I would advise you to be aware of your own growing conditions. If you grow in natural light, monitor how quickly the plants dry out during the various seasons, and relative to the temperature they grow under. You will likely notice quite a variation (a note also to use less or even no fertilizer during the winter months, as there is little growth).

If growing under florescent light, also be aware of the seasonal changes, which may not be as dramatic, but most still experience some differences.

Q: *I have a very long Episcia. It began on a windowsill, moved up to a dresser, then when the runners reached the floor, to the top of my file cabinet. Now, it is once again touching the floor! Do I trim the runners, or look for "higher ground?"*

A: Well, first of all, it sounds like your *Episcia* is very happy and doing what happy, healthy Episcias do, which is to form runners (stolons)! To start with, it would seem that your growing conditions are good so don't change anything in this area – "if it ain't broke, don't fix it"!

But you have several "cultural" options to choose from depending on your taste and overall decorative goals. As a baseline, each plant's runner is a vegetative reproduction unit geared to replace that plant. Each *Episcia* runner is a separate plant – if trimmed off and potted up, it will grow and ultimately produce runners of its own. For example, you can grow a single plant, keeping all the run-

ners pruned off. This results in a larger single specimen often with more flowers, or you can plant several stolons in a large pot and then let them produce stolon to whatever length you prefer.

Trimming off extra stolons then potting them up individually in small pots make a great addition to club plant sales, too. And be sure to label them, as many *Episcia* varieties look similar, especially when immature.

Q: *Is it safe for my plants to be fairly close to each other? I can only afford a small light stand, and I worry about pests, and them spreading to the other plants. They aren't touching, but are very close. I have no pests right now, as I check the plants regularly, but I've heard terrible stories about "collections" of African violets having to be thrown away. I could not afford to replace my plants, some of which are several years old.*

A: This grower brings up several important issues! Most of us at some point have felt this grower's dilemma and wouldn't it be great if there was an easy answer! It is so hard when confronted by a myriad of beautiful violet varieties, especially at a convention, to stay "in control"- yeah right!

The first thing I would like to comment about is that this grower is aware of the implications of growing plants that are touching each other. Actively growing plant tissues have specialized sensors and adaptive responses not only to light but also if they are touching or covered by other foliage. When an actively growing plant part, such as the expanding edge of a leaf, 'hits' another surface such as another plant, its even, symmetrical growth process is temporally 'stalled' and alters such that the growth direction is slightly 'away' from the other surface, resulting in a less symmetrical leaf edge or stem and ultimately the overall plant is affected.

Another factor to consider is that plants need good air circulation to stay healthy and to resist fungal diseases that tend to be fostered more in stagnant air.

The risk of pests crawling from plant to plant when they touch is of course true. But, considering that most of our worst pests either fly or can crawl along a shelf anyway, this is not the major mode of transmission.

I would say that shelf-growing plants given proper space, are healthier, and therefore more resistant to pests in general and can be monitored more easily for signs of early infestation.

Which leads to the issue of pest monitoring and control. We all know the motto "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." We need to remind ourselves of the importance of ISOLATING new plants away from one's growing area for several months (even up to six months) to watch for signs of not only pests, but also the dreaded INSV (Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus). This practice will help in preventing most infestations/infections and the heartbreak of having diseased plants.

Now, having said that, one may take precautions initially by checking regularly for signs of pests, and if a pest happens to appear, hopefully the infestation will be noticed early.

Treatment options include various chemicals as well as the newer field of introducing natural pest predators (that is another discussion)!

Washing the Leaves

By Joyce Stork

Turn on the faucet with mildly warm (tepid) water (no pressure) and rinse the leaves holding the plant so water does not get into the crown. You may use your thumb to gently rub across the top of each leaf as you wash it. After all leaves have been rinsed, you may blot excess water off the leaves with a paper towel. Keep the plant out of sunlight until thoroughly dry.

Smithianthas

By Thad Scaggs • tascaggs@gmail.com • Spring Hill, Florida, USA

Smithiantha is another genus in the rhizomatous group of gesneriads. Smithianthas are easy to grow and bloom. Their rhizomes, like achimenes are also easy to save so they can be grown and bloom again for many years. They are usually grown in individual pots rather than multiple plantings. A one-half inch to one-inch piece of rhizome is all you need to make a beautiful blooming plant. Smithianthas are, unfortunately, rarely exhibited in our shows because they haven't started blooming (at least enough to exhibit) for fall shows or they have started going dormant before spring shows. I've seen smithianthas exhibited a few times, but never specimens as magnificent as they can be at their peak during the winter months. Their season can be manipulated by growing from scales, but it is still very hard to time for show and you will not get the same size plant you get from a rhizome.

Smithiantha 'Splashdance'

I like to wait until I see my rhizomes breaking dormancy or just beginning to sprout. They can be started earlier, but they may just sit for a while until they're ready or until it warms up. If started early, you need to be careful not to overwater because they don't start using water until growth begins, and sitting in constantly wet mix will rot rhizomes.

Occasionally, when I have a lot of rhizomes of a single variety I will start them in a six, eight or even ten-inch pot depending on how many I have, but 90% or more are started in single pots. My smithianthas are grown almost exclusively outdoors on my lanai. If I'm growing indoors, they go under the strongest light source; those on the lanai are started and grown in full sun with only the screen overhead to diffuse the light, just like my achimenes, kohlerias, and most other rhizomatous gesneriads. I usually use Miracle-Gro Moisture Control Potting Mix now, but I have experimented with other mediums. I used straight long-fiber New Zealand sphagnum moss for a while with great success. The acidity of the moss complemented the alkaline water making the medium close to neutral. I also found the sphagnum moss didn't break down as quickly as peat moss, but it is more expensive and harder to find. I use my regular gesneriad/violet mix if I'm growing rhizomatous genera on my light stand. I wick all of my pots even those in the heavier Miracle-Gro mix, though I don't grow them on reservoirs. It's so easy to pot with a wick in case it's needed in the future for a spectacular specimen.

"An's Misty Twilight'

I start a rhizome in a Solo cup, or in plug trays, if I'm starting very many of them. Like all of my pots, except leaves and plug trays, I add a wick. I start them in full sun where I intend to grow them through their annual cycle or until they're blooming, and I display them inside. When there are four pairs of leaves, I remove the lowest pair, pot into a deep 31/2" or 4" pot with the lowest pair of

leaves left near or at potting mix level. After potting up, I pinch the tip or top pair of leaves down to the next pair. This helps make a shorter, bushier plant. You can pot up without pinching for a taller plant that will bloom sooner. I have had varieties with a dozen spikes on a plant, which is rare, but four to six spikes is normal after pinching.

Smithiantha 'Thad's Custard Pie'

I use a balanced fertilizer regularly throughout the life cycle until the blooms are finished. I let them grow on until they are ratty looking like achimenes. I then cut the foliage off, leave the plant in the pot, and stop watering or remove the rhizomes and store in zip lock bags with barely damp moss or vermiculite.

Smithianthas are very easy to hybridize; they set seed readily. Often the anthers will be right in front of the pistil, so as it grows to reveal the stigma, it can run right into the anthers exposing pollen and 'selfing' the plant. It is best to remove the anthers as soon as they are visible, a Smithianthas come in a wide range of colors: soft pastels to bright and bold, multi-colors, spotted and streaked. There are still many possibilities to be had. They also cross relatively easy with achimenes to create xAchimenantha. These usually have the basic foliage and blossoms of achimenes, but are thicker and more upright growing. I recommend giving smithianthas a try - they're quite easy to grow and very rewarding during the cooler months.

Smithiantha 'Thad's Neon Freckles'

Smithiantha 'STx S1' day or two after the blossom opens.

All of the photos shown here were taken between the end of November and mid-January. I have used smithianthas as centerpieces for Thanksgiving and my Christmas parties.

From ***The Dixie News***, Vol 63, no. 3, August 2015, a publication of the Dixie African Violet Society www.DAVS.org, Mary Lou Harden, Editor.

WILL YOU SHARE YOUR TIME AND TALENTS WITH AVSA?

By Sue Ramser, AVSA 2nd Vice-President

AVSA is always looking for members who have a little time to be shared with us. Have you wondered how you could help AVSA in addition to your special talents in growing our favorite houseplant?

Go to the AVSA Website and complete an application to be considered for a position as a Director. The Nominating Committee will then consider your application to represent your area of the country. Please list any special expertise you may have: are you a writer; are you a parliamentarian; are you a business person; are you an accountant, a bookkeeper, a CPA or a financial advisor, or do you have other special talents or expertise you would like to share with AVSA to help grow our Society?

There times that AVSA needs to call upon our members who have special talents, but we do not know who you are. Contact any member of the Executive Committee and share this information with us. There also might be a committee that needs your special talents. Your AVSA Executive Committee is listed in the front of the *AVM*. We want to hear from you, our membership

What Causes White Spots on the Leaves?

By Joyce Stork • From AVSA's Website FAQ Section

The white spots may be powdery mildew. This fungus disease has the texture of a spattering of white flour; it can be wiped off; the spots have an indistinct round form; spots may appear on both foliage and flowers. Powdery mildew thrives best in areas that have widely varying temperatures in a twenty-four hour period. Warm days feed moisture into the air, allowing the relative humidity to climb dramatically during cooler nights. If the air is not being stirred by a fan (especially at night), pockets of humidity collect between the pots and near the plants. Regulating temperatures and/or moving the air will help prevent future outbreaks.

In the meantime, Lysol disinfectant antibacterial spray can be misted in the area to control minor outbreaks. Do not direct it toward the plants from close range because aerosol sprays are very cold. For more persistent mildew, Ortho Rose Pride Rose and Shrub Disease Control is effective and does not damage violets when used as directed. Neem oil (which is also an effective insect preventative) is also a safe and effective biological control when used as directed. Other spots than can be present include: 1) water spots which can be persistent even when trying to wash them off. A bit of vinegar (rinsed off fairly quickly) can help. And 2) web-nests of the dreaded foliar mealy bug...these spots look like tiny tufts of cotton and will shred like cotton when prodded with a pin-point. Treatment is very difficult and immediate disposal is recommended.

Ohio Bountiful: An Attractive Plant, a Touch of Fame, and Lots of History

By Sue Hoffmann

Photo Credit: Paul Sorano, Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses

With no idea what I was getting into, the most interesting story evolved from the purchase of a plant at the Lyndon Lyon sales table in Kansas City. It all started innocently – when I picked up a pretty pink blossom plant – 'Ohio Bountiful.' A few quick thoughts: wonder if it's registered; who's the hybridizer – must be someone from Ohio; do I need another pink? These are standard questions that come to mind while picking up plants in the sales room. I put it down, and kept looking.

The next day I was back and once again picked up that plant. Again, it went back on the table. When I picked it up on day three, I decided there must be an attraction, maybe an omen? You know it doesn't take too much to justify buying "another" plant. Another plant it was, into my bag and up to my room it went.

That afternoon I got a big surprise. When I checked my new plants with the AVSA First Class program, 'Ohio Bountiful' read: standard, double pink; round, quilted foliage; Hybridizer: Lyndon Lyon; registered 12/31/54; registration number 419! What an amazing find! The story that follows makes it even richer.

When asked about the plant, Paul Sorano was not aware he'd brought any 'Ohio Bountiful' to Kansas City and said, "One of the girls must have packed it. You know that was the first double-pink violet." That was that and he was called away by someone else.

I wandered over to see Pat Hancock and tell her about my find. Turns out, she knew all about 'Ohio Bountiful,' and had a tale to tell. It seems the plant had been set aside and somewhat forgotten over the years – remember, this plant was registered sixty-one years ago. Around 2010, Pat received a call from a lady in Florida who was trying to identify her plant so it could be entered in an AVSA show. The woman spoke with fellow Floridian Jack Wilson, AVSA President 2002-03, who put her in touch with Pat. This woman's mother told her it was the first double-pink African violet and she should always keep it going since it was a treasure. Well, Pat had an idea that this plant was 'Ohio Bountiful.' After getting pictures and having the woman agree to send her some leaves, Pat identified the plant as 'Ohio Bountiful.' Paul Sorano also agreed with the identification. Interesting …

There had to be more to the story. I was curious. Were there other plants? Were there other doubles? Was this a random "accident" or a mutation? No better source for this information than Paul Sorano, grandson of Lyndon Lyon and owner of Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Inc.

Paul did some research and found that his grandfather was actually trying to produce double-pink blossoms. He took pollen from a single-pink blossom and crossed it on a double, rose-colored blossom. The results were less than exciting, with all purple and white singles, so he crossed those first generation seedlings back with the original single-pink blossom and was rewarded with a total

of five double pink plants. They were named: 'Double Bountiful,' 'Double Pink Cloud,' 'Pink Puff,' 'Honey Bud,' and 'Wild Rosa.'

The 1954 AVSA Convention was held in St. Louis, and it was a perfect showcase for the new double-pink African violets. Paul remembers his grandfather saying that when the showroom doors opened, the crowd around his exhibit was so large that it was impossible to get anywhere near the table. 'Double Bountiful' made such a hit that the plant was purchased right there by Baxter Greenhouses of Ohio for $1,000! The plant was renamed 'Ohio Bountiful.' After the show, leaves of the plant were sold for ten dollars each. With the inflation adjustment from 1954 to 2015 that is the same as $8,729.07 for the plant and $87.29 per leaf!

One of the other plants, 'Double Pink Cloud,' was sold to Fischer Greenhouses in Linwood, New Jersey, with stipulation for royalties from plant sales.

When Paul finished telling me what he knew about the first double-pink plants, he added that his grandfather made enough money from the sales of those two plants to build his first greenhouse in Dolgeville. What a fascinating story.

Both Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses and Pat Hancock are trying to keep this prime vintage plant available. I know it will be a fun plant to grow – maybe a project plant? Let's keep this one growing.

Pat Hancock
BUCKEYE & BLUEGRASS
AFRICAN VIOLETS
7132 Shurz Rd.
Middletown, Ohio 45042
(513) 425-0308
pat.hancock@hughes.net

Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
PO Box 249
14 Mutchler Street (for GPS users)
Dolgeville, NY 13329-0249
Phone: 315-429-8291
http://lyndonlyon.com

Don't Make Your First the Last!

By John Carter, Immediate Past President of AVSA

Last year, as in most years, there were a number of first time attendees at the AVSA convention. Often these first time attendees are there because the location was closer to their home than past conventions have been. This is one reason we seek out different locations around the country to make it easier for different attendees to enjoy a convention. If you were a first time attendee last year in Kansas City, you got to see a beautiful show, attend some great educational sessions and meet a number of new people sharing a similar interest to yours. And you even had an opportunity to add to your plant collection!

I hope that you will not make your "first" convention your "last" convention. I know that everyone may not be able to travel to Albuquerque for the convention, but with a little planning you might make it part of a nice vacation. Albuquerque is a very interesting area and has lots of attractions which you will enjoy. It is just a short drive up to Santa Fe which offers even more attractions. Watch for information about the tours and attractions in the *African Violet Magazine* and on the AVSA website.

Shortly after the first of the year, convention registration information will be on the website or you can call the office to get a hard copy mailed to you. If you can get your registration in early, you will be helping Amy get everything ready for convention in a timely manner. If you are wanting to share your hotel room with one or more friends, it is important to get your hotel reservations in early. Sometimes the hotel runs short on rooms for two or more.

Remember that "Society" is the important part of our national name. Society refers to the social aspect of our meetings, shows, and conventions. I imagine that even after attending your first convention you have found members that you would enjoy having more "social" time with. You will have an opportunity next May in Albuquerque. Plan to be there!

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Barbara Werness – Blaine, MN

'Sora Three Dorrs' (10801) 10/23/2015 (B. Werness) Semidouble white pansy/fuchsia eye, wide fuchsia band, green edge. Medium green, plain. **Standard**

REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following have been changed at the request of the hybridizers:

'Frozen in Time' (9167) – Change from star to pansy.

'Jolly Andrea' (10722) – Change to "Semidouble-double blue and variable white."

BOYCE EDENS RESEARCH FUND

Karen Broadway • 10028 N. 58th Avenue • Glendale, AZ 853302-1334
Donations received from October 1, 2015 – November 30, 2015

Multicolor

Albuquerque African Violet Club, Albuquerque, NM

Thumbprint

Barbara D. Taswell-Miller, Olathe, KS
Jean Meyer, Norwood, NJ
Gwen Goodship-Patience, Berkshire, England

Two-Tone

Sterling Extension Group, Sterling, MA
Thank you to Sue Stafford and Joan Russo for leading an outstanding workshop on African Violets for our members.

Total: $109.00

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

Nov.1 – Dec. 2, 2015
Janet Riemer • 256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534
Total this period: $ 520.37

Geneva - ($100-$499)

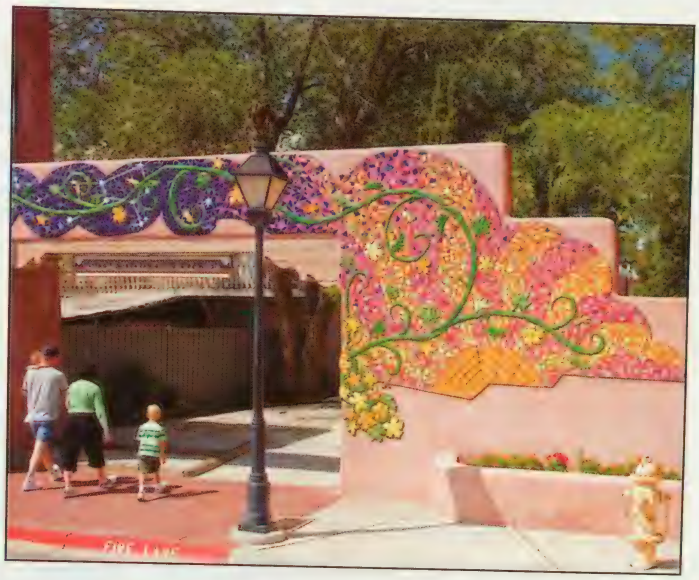
Triangle AVS (NC) – (Termination of club)
Albuquerque AVC

Two-Tone - ($25-$49)

Richard and Anne Nicholas – (Speakers' fee from First Nighter AVS of Dayton)

Albuquerque: Land of Enchantment

Photos courtesy of the Albuquerque Visitors and Convention Bureau.
www.visitalbuquerque.org



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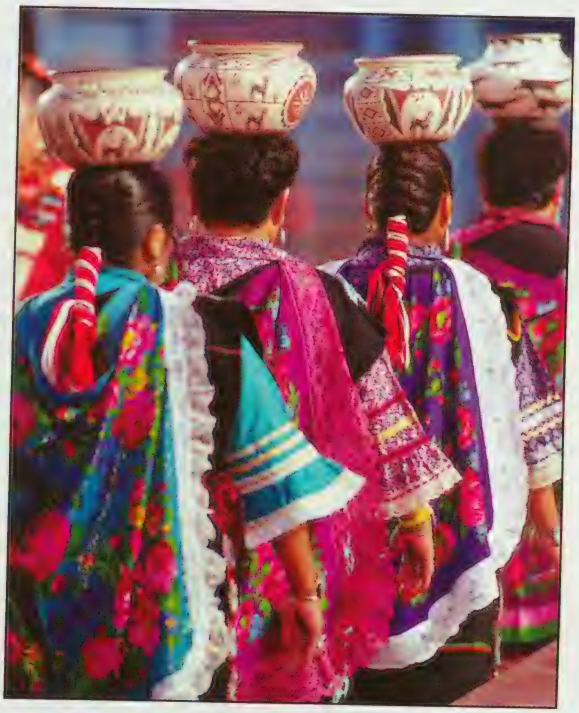


WHAT CAN YOU DO WHEN YOUR PLANT JUST DOESN'T GROW?

By Ruth Coulson, From her E Newsletter, *The African Violet Way*

Before deciding what is to be done, the first thing to do is to work out what is the cause of the problem. There are many reasons for African violets not growing at the expected or wanted rate. They are all to do with creating the best possible conditions for the plant and keeping it healthy.

Starvation - Lack of fertilizer. You wouldn't expect your children to grow without food, so don't expect your violets to do so either. It is best to use a dedicated African violet fertilizer and use it at the recommended strength, or even a little weaker. Too much is as bad as or even worse than too little fertilizer.

Drought - Being allowed to be dry. Every time you let your African violet go dry will stop growth for the period of dryness. If they are dry enough to wilt, there is a good chance that the little root hairs that take the water will have withered. So there is an even longer wait for them to re-grow before the plant itself can continue from where it left off. Let the plant wilt for too long, and you will find that the outside leaves will die. This is another reason for the plant not reaching a very large size.

Pots too small – this will inhibit growth, as the roots cannot make healthy growth. Sometimes a huge plant will grow in a small or smallish pot, but don't count on it.

Presence of many side-shoots (suckers). There was a time when even quite respected gardening "gurus" would tell us to pinch out the centers of our violets so they would grow bushier. Believe me, except for trailers, bushy is not what we are looking for. Preserve that center, and try to make sure the plant has only one crown. That way, the leaves can radiate out and grow to their potential.

Lack of light is definitely a cause. Adequate light is needed for the plant to photosynthesize; to process the fertilizer that is given to it.

Light too intense seems like a contradiction of the previous point, but it isn't. Adequate light is what is needed. If the light is too intense, the leaves do not expand because they are able to gather enough light at a slightly smaller size. This is not a way to bonsai the plants, though, because I have found that the leaves tend to layer up, one row above another rather than growing out. I have only ever seen this with plants grown under artificial lights. Plants grown by natural light are more at risk of sunburn.

Cold temperatures, especially for variegates. There are optimum temperatures for African violets, and even though they can become accustomed to temperatures a little lower, they will certainly not grow as quickly. Variegated African violets sometimes become all white/cream, rather than having any green. When they are without any green, or very little, they are not going to be able to carry out photosynthesis, and will certainly not grow. They might not even survive if in this condition for too long.

Pests or infestation are another likely cause. If your plant is not in perfect health, it cannot be expected to grow as you would like. Various things will have an impact. Mite infestation destroys the central growing point, so natural growth pretty much stops. If the roots are infested with soil mealy bugs, the plant will lose vigor, and although the difference may be imperceptible at first, the plant growth will eventually suffer. Root rot or crown rot will naturally stop the plant from growing because the root system is lost.

This is not an exhaustive list of the problems that may slow down the growth of an African violet, just some of the most common ones. In each of these cases, the remedy is obvious. Just correct whatever is wrong with the growing conditions. Control all infestations or even discard plants with pests if control is too difficult.

There are cases where the cause of the problem is not obvious. You can try giving such plants a quick boost to growth by repotting, not necessarily into a larger pot, unless a larger pot is needed. The root disturbance involved in repotting will usually encourage the plant to grow. Don't do this repeatedly, though.

(I knew of one grower, who when told to repot his plant so that it would be encouraged to start growing, came back the next month and complained, "I've repotted it three times and it still won't grow!" Poor little plant!)

And, of course, don't be in too much of a hurry. Some plants grow more slowly than others, and nothing can hurry them. If gardening in any form is to teach us anything, it should teach *patience*.

AVSA 2016 Convention and Show
'Violets Color the Land of Enchantment'
Albuquerque, NM
Sunday, May 29 – Sunday, June 5, 2016

INSERTING A PLANT INTO A DISH GARDEN OR TERRARIUM

By Claire O'Shea

If you are planting a dish garden or terrarium to enter in your Annual Show and your design is missing the perfect plant, or one of your plants is not sufficiently mature or flowering. You can still enter and don't have to delay your planting while waiting for a suitable plant to be found, grow bigger, or come into flower. You can add it at a later date. It only takes a minute or two to both prepare a space and insert the plant.

Plant up your dish garden or terrarium in accordance with your design but place an empty pot ('dummy pot') of the same size as your missing plant in the planned place. This will not only provide a perfectly molded hole to drop the plant into prior to entry, but will also prevent the other plants' roots from filling the space and needing to be disturbed. At this stage, do not add any pebbles, sand, or sphagnum moss to hide the potting mix.

Closer to the show, when you have obtained your desired plant or it is of a suitable size or coming into bloom, you can add it to your arrangement. Carefully remove your 'dummy' pot. Depending upon the depth of your potting mix and the depth to which you were able to submerge your 'dummy' pot, you may need to remove some of your plant's root ball. Your desired plant, if it is of a suitable size or coming into bloom, you can add it to your arrangement. Carefully remove your 'dummy' pot. Depending upon the depth of your potting mix and the depth to which you were able to submerge your 'dummy' pot you may need to remove some of your plant's root ball.

Carefully un-pot your plant, remove the appropriate amount of root ball as necessary, decide on the best 'view' of your plant, and insert it into the waiting hole. Fill in as necessary with potting mix.

Finalize your planting with pebbles, sand, sphagnum moss and any ornaments. Water your arrangement sparingly with a spray bottle. Drain and bring it along to enter into the Show. (While obvious from my instructions, make sure not to leave any pots either empty or containing plants in your arrangement.)

From the *Newsletter of The Early Morn AV Group*, Australia

Technically Speaking...or Not

By Neil Lipson

Phone: (610) 356-6183
Email: ndlipson@gmail.com

Fine Tuning Your Violets for Your Conditions. The bottom line is that you need to do a little experimentation

Let's cut to the chase: your growing conditions and other variables will drastically affect how your violets grow, rather than trying to use one formula for everyone. I cannot over-emphasize this fact. The guilty parties in growing violets are different water quality, and fluctuations in soil quality and pH. However, I have a starting point for everyone to use and will cover how to minimize the problems from the start. For the experts, please note what Pat Hancock uses for her soil choice at the end of this article.

Over and over, I hear that one person will swear by a particular soil while another will downplay their results. The same with one kind of lighting compared to another, and even different techniques on number of hours, humidity, etc. What is going on? I will try to shed some light on what you can and can't do to improve your growing and specifically, what factors are NOT in your control.

The first point I want to make is to maintain a certain level of standards in your growing. Measure out the soil ingredient mix using a kitchen cup, check the pH properly with a pH meter and adjust with dolomite powder, watch out for water variations, and even worse, changes in the formulations of the soil at the factory. The factors that are under your control are the soil choice, water, fertilizer, lighting and hours of operation, as well as placement of the plants on the shelves by judging the distance both vertically from the lamps and location on the tray.

Those factors that are out of your control are humidity, outdoor temperatures, and seasons that allow any sunlight going through windows into the growing room. As Pat Hancock has said, your plants always seem to know what the weather is like outside. I will address the individual aspects of each, starting with the soil.

Soil for your African Violets

Some growers will buy a soil that is sold all across the country assuming the soil has the same standards and consistency no matter where you buy it. This may NOT be the case, and the results will be plants that grow differently depending where the soil was made. When the pH from bag to bag varies, that is a dead giveaway that the quality control may not consistent.

Keep in mind that there are two important aspects to any soil, and they are first, whether the soil is manufactured and packaged at one plant only, and second, whether the ingredients in the soil are the best for growing violets. These two aspects are totally different, and the more you know, the better will your growing results be.

The brand of the soil will matter to a degree, depending on where you live, what your conditions are and what you are growing. Sharon Gartner, president of the Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society, conducted an experiment on what soil her particular club had the most success with. Sharon first tested the pH and then the quality of the plants as they grew, and the results were as follows:

SOIL PREFERENCE AND DATA

Sharon Gartner testing:
pH results using the Oakton EcoTestr pH2 waterproof pH tester:
Baccto® Premium Potting Soil 6.3

2015 Soil Experiment - Soil Description and Ingredients

For our soiless mixes we did nothing but sift the soils that had a lot of BIG debris, then added 50% perlite to all, that is it!

Fox Farm - Club Soil	The ultimate potting soil—everything your plants need, in one bag. Ocean Forest® is a powerhouse blend of **premium earthworm castings, bat guano, and sea-going fish and crab meal. Aged forest products, sandy loam, and sphagnum peat moss give Ocean Forest® its light, aerated texture**. Start with Ocean Forest® and watch your plants come alive!
BACCTO	A general, all-purpose potting soil for indoor or outdoor plants in containers and beds. BACCTO Premium Potting Soil provides a **special blend of naturally nutritious dark reed sedge peat, perlite, and sand. This formula includes both starter and slow-release fertilizers** to provide the best possible plant growth from one easy-to-use product.
Pro-Mix BX BioFungicide + Mycorrhizae	Pro-Mix BX Biofungicide + Mycorrhizae is a general purpose peat-based professional growing medium suitable for a wide variety of horticultural plants and transplanting applications. FEATURES: **Traditional peat-based growing medium with perlite and vermiculite; Is pH-adjusted;** General-purpose growing mix for transplanting a wide variety of plant species; Ideal for the production of vegetable transplants in large cell trays; Contains Mycorrhizae mycorrhizal inoculum (Glomus intraradices). Contains Biofungicide - (Bacillus pumilus – strain GHA-180).
Black Gold - African Violet Potting Soil	**Canadian Sphagnum peat moss, bark, compost, perlite or pumice or cinders, earthworm castings, and organic fertilizer.** Picky African violets thrive in this blend that maintains a good balance between porosity and organic matter for happy, blooming plants with beautiful foliage. It is also suited to Gloxinia, Sinningia, Streptocarpus and other gesneriads and sensitive container plants.
Organic Mechanics Premium Blend	At Organic Mechanics, we're passionate about all natural, sustainable gardening that provides superior results. That's why our soils are 100% organic, made with locally sourced ingredients, **completely peat-free Contains: compost, pine bark, coir, worm castings, and perlite. Our most moisture-retentive blend, chock-full of compost and worm castings.** Use for small containers, window boxes or for any plant that needs moist soil. Cut your watering time in half! You'll water half as often as compared with peat-based mixes.
Miracle-Gro African Violet Potting Mix	**This product is formulated from (one or more of the following: processed forest products, peat, coir, and/or compost), and sphagnum peat moss, perlite, fertilizer (see below), and a wetting agent. (contents may vary by state) Guaranteed Analysis: Total Nitrogen (N)* 0.21% (0.113 ammoniacal nitrogen, 0.097% nitrate nitrogen); Available phosphate (P2O5)* 0.11%; Soluble potash (k2O)* 0.16%. Derived from polymer-coated: ammonium nitrate, ammonium phosphate, calcium phosphate, and potassium sulfate; and ammonium nitrate, ammonium phosphate, calcium phosphate, and potassium sulfate. *A portion of the nitrogen, phosphate and potash has been coated to provide 0.12% coated slow-release nitrogen (N), 0.04% coated slow-release available phosphate (P2O5), and 0.08% coated slow-release soluble potash (K2O)**

FoxFarm Ocean Forest® 7.0
Miracle-Gro® African Violet Potting Mix 5.3
Black Gold® African Violet Mix 7.0
Organic Mechanics® Premium Blend Potting Soil 7.2
Pro Mix African Violet Mix 7.1

Footnotes:

1. An old bag of Foxfarm measured 4.7 pH, so watch out

2. Miracle-Gro® African Violet Potting Mix pH varied across the country from 5.1 to 6.4, so you MUST check your particular bag before you use it

Sharon's personal ranking for her own soil preference results for African violets from the best to worst using growth results as the main criteria are:

1. FoxFarm® Ocean Forest
2. Black Gold® African Violet Mix - close tie
3. Miracle Gro® African Violet Mix
4. Baccto® Premium Potting Soil
5. Pro-Mix® African Violet Mix
6. Organic Mechanics® Premium Blend Potting Soil

Carolee Carter's testing:

I then asked Carolee Carter (who lives further south of Sharon in Central Florida) what her soil preference was based on pH and growth results, and the results were as follows:

1. FoxFarm Ocean Forest® mix – if available and can be tough to find
2. Farfard® African Violet Potting Mix – works well with little aggravation
3. Miracle-Gro® AV Mix – works well, but you must consider the added fertilizer
4. Pro-Mix® HP – is subject to availability in your area

Keep in mind that even though both of these growers live near each other, the difference in growing techniques, water, lighting and many other variables can cause them each to have difference growth and blooming qualities. This shows that you cannot choose a soil only by a geographical location, even if the soil composition is identical.

Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society testing:

These are the choice of soils from all the members in this club: club preferences

1. Foxfarm Ocean Blend - tied for first
2. Black gold are tied - tied for fist
3. Baccto
4. Miracle Gro AV soil
5. Promix
6. Organic Mechanic Premium Blend

In my previous article in AVM, I discussed the difference of pH with Miracle-Gro® African Violet Mix across the country. The bottom line was that the grower really had to adjust the pH depending on what that particular bag's results were. This is due to the fact that the manufacturer probably had numerous packing plants which caused the variation in pH but not necessarily in the soil composition.

CONCLUSION

So what should the grower do when choosing a soil for their plants? The best suggestion is to try and experiment with what is available in your location on just a few plants, and see what works best. Even better, as a starting point, get ideas and availability from your local club on what the other club members use, which will reduce the experimentation time dramatically. Once you standardize, you can make minor adjustments to all of the growing factors to get the results that you want. You only have to do this once, and then you're set for the future.

In all of my articles I try to discover a different aspect of African violet growing that to my knowledge has not been discussed before. This is a challenge, as I'm always pushing the envelope to find better products, techniques and controls of the environment to produce show-quality plants. Because all of these ideas that I examine are new, they will need to be tweaked over time for optimum results, so this is a disclaimer to keep in mind.

I would like to thank both Sharon Gartner, the Jacksonville Florida club and Carolee Carter from the Ocala Florida club for their tireless work and their input in producing this article.

For all the Pat Hancock fans, her personal choice for store bought soil is: Promix BH with Mycorize with 50% course perlite, (soil - promix BX - never get bail, only bag) and never remove soil off of the root ball, but use a mold pot method as was discussed in the AVM article in 2015.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer and cyber security consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern time. He will return your call.

Fuzzy Leaves

By Joyce Stork

There are several advantages that are credited to African violets' fuzzy leaves. 1) The nap (or the direction that the hairs lean) is toward the tip of the leaf, away from the center of the plant, so that raindrops tend to run off of the plant instead of into the crown where the moisture could lead to rot. 2) The hairs provide a sort of air blanket against any changes in air temperature, which are common in nature. Violets thrive at 72 degrees Fahrenheit with a range of five degrees on either side of that. 3) Larger chewing pests, like beetles, are held above the actual plant tissue by the hairs. When they try to feed on violets, they get an undesirable mouthful of fuzz and soon move on to other easier food sources. The entire Gesneriad family (which includes African violets, but also Episcia, Gloxinia, Achimenes, Streptocarpus, etc) is characterized by some degree of fuzz on the leaf. All photosynthesis goes on in the surface cells of the leaf itself, so the hairs do not impact photosynthesis.

Variegated African Violet Leaves

By Joyce Stork

From the AVSA website FAQs

The problem with variegated violets is that the more variegation (non-green areas) the less chlorophyll, which means that heavily variegated violets have less ability to produce energy than violets with all green foliage. Blooming requires energy. The amount of light that the violet receives is almost irrelevant if the violet has too little chlorophyll to process the light. So the real secret to getting variegates to bloom freely lies more in controlling the amount of variegation so that the plant is able to thrive. To control variegation requires understanding what is needed for a plant to produce chlorophyll. First, it needs nitrogen which is the essential building block for chlorophyll. Second, the plant needs pH in a range that allow its roots to absorb the nitrogen. Third it needs the nitrogen in a form that can be absorbed, which often requires the presence of beneficial bacteria in the soil to process the nitrogen into a usable form. Finally, if the plant is depending on the beneficial bacteria, the temperature of the potting mix must be warm enough for the bacteria to be active. Some of the old wisdom in growing variegates was to use fertilizers with little to no nitrogen. That can work in areas that have nitrogen available in the air (think thunderstorms) or in the water source. It works especially well in areas that are very warm because the available nitrogen is processed very efficiently by the soil bacteria. But that approach can quickly lead to too much variegation in other regions, especially those areas that are colder. As pretty as an all-white foliage plant might be, it is death waiting to happen. The challenge is to control the variegation so that the violet has a very attractive look without being so variegated that it no longer thrives. Many growers have found that the secret lies in providing a balanced fertilizer, making certain the pH is near 6.8, and moving the plant to cooler or warmer areas as needed. Moving the plant at the proper time requires some common sense ("the plant room is cold during the winter") and some instinct ("the center of the crown looks too white"). Where to move it to? The air is likely to be cooler near the floor and warmer near the ceiling. The light must continue to be adequate in either location. Once those conditions are met to control the variegation, your violets should be able to bloom freely (according to the variety) in the same quality of light (along with the other optimum growing conditions) that would be required for most green varieties to bloom well.

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Petite Tart

Exhibited by: *Michele Wickersham*

Hybridized by: *H. Pittman*

Miniature

Primulina 'Finella'

Exhibited by:
Nancy Carr

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Sinningia 'Country Prayer'

Exhibited by:
Betty Ferguson

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com

What happens when you Google the phrase, "African violet stuff?" You come up with Cafepress.com. This web site has anything and everything an African violet fan could ever want. The themed products include tee shirts and clothing, accessories, hobbies, drink ware, home products, cases and covers, wall art, and stationary.

Tee shirts are available with almost every violet picture and design imaginable. With 101 different choices, there is something to please everyone. There is the standard, "I heart African Violets" phrase, photos, and artistic renditions in sizes to fit all ages, including men, women, kids, and babies.

The baby products are adorable. There are seventy-four items listed. They range from 'onesies,' to hats and bibs. Again, there are a variety of designs to choose from.

The accessories category is interesting. One can find ball caps, tote bags, beverage flasks, flip flops, earrings, dog tag necklaces and more. While some of the tee shirts were not African violet themed, (elephants and giraffes) this category had quite a few indirectly related items. In fact, all the categories seemed to have a few odd selections that were not violet related.

My favorite item in the hobbies section was a teddy bear wearing a tee shirt featuring a photo of Alamo Gold. There are also inflatable balloons for your next club party, key chains, and refrigerator magnets. You can even include your dog in your love of African violets, by purchasing collar tags and tee shirts.

The drink ware category had numerous possibilities, with 200 designs available on 1, 390 products. Some of the products like coffee mugs can be customized with a person's name. There are drinking glasses and coasters. Travel mugs and thermos bottles are available here. Perhaps the most interesting product in this category was the miniature flask on a chain, designed to be worn as a necklace.

If you need stationary, this is the place to go. From greeting cards to blank notes to invitations, Cafepress has it. There are spiral notebooks and journals. Calendars are available too.

Items for the home duplicated a few items from other categories, but still offered a large, varied selection. The ornaments were particularly eye catching. A favorite had a photo of 'Irish Maiden.' Another said, "Gone to Pot – African Violets." From barbeque aprons to beer steins, and mouse pads to shower curtains, there is something in this category for everyone.

Need a new skin for your laptop or IPad? If you want one proclaiming your interest in African violets, check out the Cases and Covers tab. There are Tough Cases for IPhones. Kindle sleeves are also available.

The Wall Art section has various African violet-related options. There are posters and wall decals. Prints are available, either framed or unframed. Canvas art is also an option.

When I clicked on an item to preview the shopping process, it immediately brought up all the other available items with the same design. There was a 25% off deal going the day I previewed the site, as advertised in a banner across the top. Most of the prices were reasonable, and in-line with any specialty item that you would find in a brick and mortar store.

Not only can you buy on Cafepress, but it is possible to sell as well. You create and upload a design. The company puts it on items, sells the items, and you earn royalty. You can also open a Cafepress store. Various tabs give instructions on how to create and sell items.

If you have interests other than African violets, you simply enter key words into the search bar at the top of the home page. I typed in two separate searches. One was for Quarter Horses, the other Shetland Ponies. I found I could by everything from pajamas and undergarments to coffee mugs and more themed around these two types of equines. It is safe to say Cafepress sells something for everyone.

You can find all of the above at:
www.cafepress.com/+African-violet+gifts

Are You Ready for Your First Convention?

By Candace Baldwin

After hearing about it from friends and seeing pictures of the amazing plants, designs, and fun festivities in the AVM every year, you've decided to take the plunge and go. Congratulations! I know you'll have a good time and meet new friends.

If you haven't yet registered for the convention, you still can by downloading and completing the convention package available on the AVSA website. One of the questions you'll need to answer in the registration package is if you want to enter any plants or designs in the Show. I highly encourage you to do one or both.

Participating in the show at the national convention is an amazing experience. I know many people at their first convention shy away from the idea saying they just want to "go and see what it's like" before being an exhibitor. I felt the same way and was more than a little intimidated at the thought of entering at my first convention. I did it anyway, and am so glad I did. Having a goal to have at least one entry gave me a reason to spend more time with my plants!

Also on your registration form, be sure to check the box to attend the First Time Attendees Meeting on Wednesday afternoon. I'll be covering the different aspects of the convention such as explaining the different raffle tables, reviewing the souvenir convention booklet, giving insider tips and providing lots of time to meet other first timers and answer questions.

Once you arrive at the convention, one of the first things you should do is to check in at the Registration Desk. There you will receive a package that contains various information about what you registered for, the souvenir convention booklet, and other assorted items. Until then, feel free to contact me at aviolets@hotmail.com with any questions. See you in Albuquerque!

APPLICATION TO JOIN — The African Violet Society of America, Inc.

2375 North Street, Beaumont TX 77702 www.avsa.org 409-839-4725 avsa@earthlink.net

Membership runs one year from the date paid and includes 6 issues of the *African Violet Magazine.* Dues are not refundable.

- ☐ Individual Membership USA ($35)
- ☐ Associate Member ($17.50) (Must reside with an AVSA member and no magazine will be mailed)
- ☐ International Individual, Canada ($40)
- ☐ International Individual, other than Canada ($60)
- ☐ Commercial USA ($60)
- ☐ Commercial Canada ($65)
- ☐ Commercial International, other than Canada ($70)
- ☐ Affiliate Chapter, all levels, USA ($35)
- ☐ Affiliate Chapter, all levels, Canada ($40)
- ☐ Affiliate Chapter, International other than Canada ($45)
- ☐ Library ($35)
- ☐ Life Member USA ($1,000)
- ☐ Life Member International ($1,500)

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal Membership # _____

Please print neatly below or apply online at www.avsa.org/membership Date _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Country _____

Email address _____

Phone number _____

VISA/MC accepted; or make your check payable to **AVSA, Inc.**

Credit Card # _____

Exp. Date _____

CVV2 Security Code # _____ (last three digits on back of the card)

Signature _____

Were you encouraged to join AVSA by a particular individual, vendor or group? If so, please enter their name here: _____

International applicants not using credit card may pay in US dollars with a draft or check on a USA bank. International Postal money orders accepted. PayPal is available with online application.

Adventures in Growing *Streptocarpus*

By Josh McKinney • Goshen, KY

Streptocarpus 'Tunnel Vision'

I have grown African violets since childhood and wanted to attempt to grow *Streptocarpus* plants again. Many years ago, I had obtained some unnamed varieties from a local greenhouse, and they lasted only a few months. I had neglected them a few times, but where did I go wrong?

First, I did not properly study their culture requirements. Second, I squeezed them in where I could fit them, on the end of the plant shelf instead of where they needed to be (closer to the light fixture). I also forgot to water them a few times and drenched them when I eventually noticed they were dry. Additionally, I left them in the heavy peat-based mix they were potted in instead of planting them in a airy, lighter mix with more perlite. Finally, I waited too long to properly address a pest problem. It is surprising the Streps lasted as long as they did!

Returning to the present, my interest was piqued by the prospect of scented Streps advertised in the AVM. I began searching for Streps online. I admired the beautiful flower photos and variety descriptions of the commercial growers, but hesitated when I calculated how expensive it would be to ship only one plant. I did not want to order several and have them die, considering my past experience.

Early this spring, I received a postcard in the mail from the Cincinnati AVS notifying me of their upcoming April 11th Show and Sale. There was even a coupon for a complimentary violet leaf! I made plans to travel there to find one of the elusive scented Streps! Upon arriving, I observed the beautiful violets and gesneriads in the show, then visited the sales tables. I inquired about Streps and the nice lady there replied that she did not know if they had any, but I should ask Mel Grice.

I waited my turn to speak with him and asked if he had any scented ones at the show. He did not, so I asked him which variety would be good for beginners. He recommended a few good varieties, but I decided on *Streptocarpus* 'Tunnel Vision,' a Thompson hybrid. It has medium-large dark blue-purple flowers with a dramatic white throat accented with near-black stripes. I brought it home and was hooked! To acclimate the Strep to my growing conditions (natural light in this case), I gradually opened the zippered storage bag which encased it. As the plant grew, I turned it from time to time and watered carefully; small amounts at a time when the soilless mix began to become dry.

Streptocarpus 'Tunnel Vision' before division.

I eventually removed the plastic bag.

In early June it bloomed! I was quite pleased.

I watered occasionally with African violet fertilizer and the plant grew vigorously. The time came to divide and repot, so I used the same four-inch pot for the original plant and a three-inch pot for the smaller one. I waited for the Strep's mix to be on the dry side before dividing it. Then, I removed the plant from its pot and gently teased apart the smaller one from the larger plant. Perlite was added to the soilless mix I use for violets (perhaps a bit too much!). I first put some mix in the bottom of the pot, then placed the plant and filled it up to the top. Also, I believe the separated plants were kept in plastic for a couple of weeks to aid in healing from the division.

Strep 'Tunnel Vision' has been in nearly constant bloom since then, only resting for barely a week or two at a time. I would highly recommend it to anyone who has not grown it yet!

Buckeye Nostalgia

Best Standard

MAAVS 2015

***Exhibited by:** Susan Arnao*

***Hybridized by:** P. Hancock*

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

"And the winners are ..."

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

AVC OF GREATER KANSAS CITY, MO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: LC's Raspberry Whisper, Missouri Pride, Santee Sioux; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cajun's Alfie, Cajun's Lil Sprinkles, LC's Little Wildcat; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Fairy Fountains; Best Standard: Missouri Pride; Best Miniature: Imp's Fairy Berry; Best Semiminiature: Cool Teen; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Lynn Canning.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Merion', **Barbara Taswell-Miller.** Best Design, **Merian Schaaf.**

AV COUNCIL OF FLORIDA, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Claret Wine, Buckeye Tea Party, Buckeye Party Streamers; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Party Streamers; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tongwensis*, **Kurt Jablonski.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Edge of Darkness, Cajun's Blueberry Hill, Strelets Elite; Best Semiminiature: Lyon's Little Sweetheart, **Sharon Gartner.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cajun's McKenna Trail, Rob's Gundaroo, Rob's Galiwinku, **Carolee Carter.** Best Miniature: Rob's Twinkle Blue, **Phyllis King.** Best Trailer: Sunray Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bobbi Johannsen.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Scarlet Macaw', **Gladys Cook.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Lou Harden.**

LONE STAR AV COUNCIL, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Nostalgia, Rhapsodie Cora, The Alps; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Jam, Jolly Mel, Rob's Inner Orbit; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Nostalgia, **Mary Corondan.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Sentimental Reasons, Rebel's Rose Bud, Lonestar Daybreak, **Richard Nicholas.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cherry Chimes, Rob's Fuzzy Navel, Rob's Boogie Woogie; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Redneck; Best Miniature: Shirl's Red Sky, **Anne Nicholas.** Best Trailer: Jersey Girl Trail; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Joanne Schrimsher.** Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ken Froboese.** Best Design, **Danny Tidwell.** Design Sweepstakes, **Jane Rexilius.**

MID ATLANTIC AVS, PA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Bob Serbin, Stargate, Wrangler's Gaudy Lady, **Donna Brining.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Heritage Frolic, Mini Papa, Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Nostalgia; Best Semiminiature: Mini Papa; Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grotei*, **Susan Arnao.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Petite Blarney, Rob's Cherry Soda, Toy Castle; Best Miniature: Petite Blarney, **Sue Hoffmann.** Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Barbara Jones.** Best Gesneriad: *Columnea polyantha*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Drew Norris.** Best Design, **Vicki Carr.**

MISSOURI VALLEY AV COUNCIL, MO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Santee Sioux, Smooch Me, Tatanka; Best in Show/Best Standard: Tatanka; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kent Stork.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cajun's Alfie, Cajun's Lil Sprinkles, LC's Little Wildcat; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Mini Sota; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid, **Lynn Canning.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jersey Jazz, Optimara Little Ottawa, Jolly Maiden, **Susan Hapner.** Best Trailer: RS-Glamor; Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea* 'Currant Bun', **Joyce Stork.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, **Brandon Erikson.** Best Design, **Jeanne Cotten.** Design Sweepstakes, **Fran Russom.**

NEW YORK STATE AVS, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Goluboi Tuman, Omaha Thunder, Miss Lily; Best in Show/Best Standard: Goluboi Tuman; Best Miniature: Precious Red; Design Sweepstakes, **Carolyn Klein.** Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha, Saintpaulia* 5a clone *grandifolia* #237, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa*; Best Trailer: Cherokee Trail; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha*; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Paul Kroll.** Best Semiminiature: Irish

Angel, **Eileen McGrath.** Best Gesneriad: *Columnea sanguinea*, **Barbara Festenstein.**

TORONTO AVS, ONTARIO – Winners: Best in Show/Best Miniature: H-Avatar; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Alla Kotova.** Best Semiminiature: Morgan's Chutney Popcorn; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina tabacum*; Design Sweepstakes, **Steve Kerr.** Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail, **Alla Smirnova**; Best Design, **Deanna Belli.**

TRISTATE AV COUNCIL, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Celebration, Tiger; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Mel, Jolly Dreamland, Jolly Frills; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, **Paula Bal.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Halo's Aglitter, Ode to Beauty, Leading Lady, **Linda LoPresti.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Bad Bunny, Petite Jewel, Jolly Bunny; Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5f clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*, *Saintpaulia* 5a clone *grandifolia* No. 299, *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha* Mather No. 20; Best Semiminiature: Jersey Sugar Plums; Best Miniature: Jolly Bunny; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Kurzynski.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa*, **Edward Bradford.** Best Gesneriad: *Primulina tamiana*, **Janet Riemer.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Janice Murasko.**

WISCONSIN COUNCIL OF AV CLUBS, WI – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: The Alps, Rhapsodie Cora, Rebel's Restless Heart; Best Standard: Rebel's Restless Heart, **Arlene Garvens.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ma's Mardi Gras, Ma's Wicked Witch, Cajun's Fair Maiden; Best Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Wow, Jolly Dear, Cajun's Lil Sprinkles; Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa* Mather E, *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha, Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tongwensis*; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Dolores' Royal Prince; Best Trailer: Deer Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina dryas* 'Hisako'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Blue Clouds, Jolly Sailor, Jolly Orchid; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Star; Best Design, **Ruth Mengsol.** 2nd Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa* Mather E; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Marty Anderson.** Design Sweepstakes, **Doug Kindschuh.**

Submitting "And the winners are..." Information

The *"And the winners are..."* column is a valuable listing of AVSA affiliate show award winners. It contains the name of the affiliate, the location, and the names of the top winning plants. Even the names of growers and designers are listed. It is valuable tool when deciding which plants are consistent award winners, either in one section of the country or throughout the nation and beyond. It also allows you see the names of your friends who are growers and designers and the awards they have received.

After applying for the Standard Show Award packet from the Schedule Approver, a packet of various forms will be sent to the Show Chair. The *"And the winners are..."* form is included in this packet. Upon completion of the affiliate show, the *"And the winners are..."* form may be handwritten and sent to me via the post office.

It may also be submitted online by going to the avsa.org website, logging in as a member, and clicking on the Member Content tab. Next, click on the *"And the winners are..."* tab where you will find a link under Show Reports. You can submit the form directly to me via email or print a pdf form to mail through the post office. When the report is submitted online, you will be emailed an automated reply stating that it has been received.

Be sure to submit your Show Winners in a timely manner. The deadline for getting the information to me is April 1 for the July/August issue of the *African Violet Magazine*. The successive deadlines are listed in the *African Violet Magazine* on the AVSA Information page under deadlines for Articles and Columnists.

Thank you for submitting your show winners for publication. If you have questions, feel free to email me at the above address. Happy growing and showing!

Episcia 'Suomi'

By Larry Hoyle

I suppose it is inevitable that once you grow one type of plant, you feel the need to try another. After growing African violets for a while, I tried growing another type of *Gesneriad, Streptocarpus*. That went all right at first. Then most of them died and the survivors did not look that great. I think it was the dryness of the area in which I had to grow them. Nevertheless, I have purchased more Streps from time to time, and kept trying. I think I have gotten better results as I learned more about them, particularly with the trial and error method. Increased humidity seems to help.

Having gotten some experience with Streps, I thought I should try another *Gesneriad.* I had not decided on what plant to choose until I saw *Episcia* 'Suomi'. My wife and I were at the Philadelphia AVSA show. You would have liked that plant too. I have included a photo with this story. The leaves were large with beautiful colors and designs, and the bright yellow flowers were a perfect match for the foliage. There was some orange at the center of each flower.

Somehow, my wife tracked down the grower and got a cutting of the plant as the show ended and gave it to me. After we got home, I tried growing it the same way I would care for an African violet. Unfortunately, it did not survive.

Sometime later, we were at Lyndon Lyons Greenhouses in New York. I found a few episcias in small pots on one of his benches and one of them was 'Suomi!' So I purchased it. I also purchased two other varieties of *Episcia* as back up. I brought them home, but this time to a different environment because we had moved. I started growing them in our living room where I could keep an eye on them. Once again, the episcias started to look sickly and I did not think they would survive.

Based on my experience with the Streps, I suspected that low humidity was a factor. My wife commented that she thought many growers use glass bowls for their episicas. So I bought some glass bowls and glass plates to use as covers, then planted E. 'Suomi' and the other episcias in them. I moved the plants to my new basement plant room and regularly monitored the bowls for too much or too little humidity. To my delight, 'Suomi' and the other episcias began to thrive.

I was able to bring three episcias to the Bay State show this year. One of them was 'Suomi' pictured. It had not bloomed yet, probably due to the long, cold, snowy winter, but had large leaves and was growing right out of its bowl. I am sure it will soon have those yellow/orange flowers. Then, my Suomi will look just like the one I saw in Philadelphia. As W.E. Hickson wrote in England, circa 1857, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again."

From Ye Bay Stater,
Publication of the Bay State AVS

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Sinningia 'Gabriels Horn'

Exhibited by: *Dale Martens*

COMING EVENTS

March 4 & 5 - FLORIDA
CFAVS Annual Show and Sale
Beardall Senior Center
800 Delaney Avenue
Orlando, Florida 32801
Friday, March 4, Noon to 4pm
Saturday, March 5, 10am to 4pm
Sale Room opens at
10 am both days
Info: Linda Price,
laprice41@yahoo.com
(407) 462-5923

March 5 & 6 - TEXAS
Spring Branch African Violet Club
36th Annual Spring
Show and Sale
Judson Robinson Jr.
Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive
Houston, TX 77004
March 5: Show: 1pm – 5pm
Sale: 9am – 5pm
March 6: Show & Sale:
10am – 3pm
Free Parking Available
Workshop: 1pm Both Days
Info: Karla Ross (281) 748-8417
Email: kjwross@yahoo.com

March 12 - OREGON
Portlandia Violet Club
Portland Nursery
9000 SE Division
Hours 10am to 3pm
AV Sale, Display, Demonstrations
African violets and other related plants
Info: (503) 761-7861

March 18 & 19 – DELAWARE
Delaware AV & Gesneriad Society
Sale/Display/Educational Exhibit
Fri-Mar 18: 1pm – 9pm
Sat -Mar 19: 10am – 4pm
Boscov's Department Store
Christiana Town Center
Route 273, Christiana, DE
Info: rlafash@comcast.net

March 18 & 19 - MINNESOTA
AVS of Minnesota Spring
Judged Show/Sale
Northtown Mall
398 Northtown Drive N.E.
Blaine, MN 55434
March 18 - 10am - 7pm
March 19 - 10am - 4pm
Info: Pat Mattson
http://sites.google.com/site/avsminnesota

March 19 & 20 - TEXAS
First Austin AVS
47th Annual Judged Show and Sale
Austin Area Garden Center
Zilker Botanical Garden
2220 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78746
March 19 – 11:00am – 4:30pm
March 20 – 11:00am – 3:30pm
Info: Susan Kautz
(512) 365-1818
email: gizzmo@austin.rr.com
www.faavs.org

March 18 & 19 - TEXAS
First AVS of Denton
Annual Show and Sale
March 18 & 19
First Presbyterian Church
Denton, TX
www.favsd.org for more information

March 19 & 20 - NEW YORK
Sweetwater AVS
41st Annual Judged Show/Sale
Mar 19 - 2pm – 5pm
Mar 20 - Noon – 4pm
West Sayville Fire Dept
80 Montauk Highway
West Sayville, NY
$2.00 donation requested

April 1 & 2 - TEXAS
Dallas Metro AVS Show/Sale
Open from 10am to 4pm
Many varieties of AVs and
Other Gesneriads
Two workshops 'The Care of African
Violets and Gesneriads'
Both Days: 11am & 2pm
Public invited: no charge
North Haven Gardens
7900 North Haven
Dallas, TX 75230

April 1 & 2 - FLORIDA
Heart of Jacksonville AVS
24th Annual AV Show & Sale
San Jose Church of Christ
6233 San Jose Blvd.
(Family Life Center
Fellowship Hall)
Jacksonville, Florida 32217
April 1, Noon – 5pm)
April 2, 10am – 4pm
Show will be judged by the
standards of AVSA
Info: Sharon Gartner
(904) 536-4182
Sharon@jacksonvilleviolets.org
http://www.jacksonvilleviolets.org
https://www.facebook.com/HeartOf-
JacksonvilleVioletSociety

April 2 - CALIFORNIA
Bakersfield AVS
Annual Show/Sale
East Bakersfield Veterans Hall
2101 Ridge Road
Bakersfield, CA 93305
Info: Joe Meyer
joescritters@hotmail.com

April 2 & 3 - CALIFORNIA
Capital City AVS
Annual Judged Show/Sale
Sacramento Garden & Arts Center
3330 McKinley Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95816
April 2 – 1pm - 4pm
April 3 - 11am - 3pm
Free parking/free admission.
Info: Kathy Norton
(kathy.norton@mac.com)
www.sacviolets.org

April 2 - CONNECTICUT
Windsor AVS Annual Judged
Show/Sale
Grace Episcopal Church
311 Broad Street
Windsor, CT 06095
Hours: 8:30am - 2:30pm
Info: Nancy Hayes
(860) 930-6260
Email: violetnancy@comcast.net
http://www.windsorafricanviolets.org/

April 2 - MICHIGAN
Michigan State AVS
Display & Sale, African Violets, Streps, & other Gesneriads
Saturday, April 2: 10am - 4pm
Matthaei Botanical Gardens
1800 Dixboro Rd
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Info: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

April 2 - CALIFORNIA
The Bakersfield AVS Judged Show/Sale
April 2: Noon - 4pm
2101 Ridge Rd.
Bakersfield, CA 93305
Info: Bill Novickas
Phone (661) 345 1233
Email: BNIA1@hotmail.com

April 8 & 9 - TEXAS
Magic Knight AVS
Judged Show/Sale
San Antonio Garden Center
3310 N. New Braunfels Ave.
San Antonio TX 78209
Sale: Both Days: 9am-4pm
Show: April 8 -1pm – 4pm
April 9 - 9am – 3pm
Info: Dorcas Brashear
210-394-1286

April 8 & 9 - TEXAS
First AVS of Wichita Falls
Annual Show/Sale
Fellowship Hall, University United Methodist Church
3405 Taft St, Wichita Falls, TX
Apr 8: Free of charge to public: 2:30pm – 4:30pm
Apr 9: 10am – 4pm
Info: Allene Peek: allenepeek@gmail.com
Sue Ramser: ramserwf@wf.net.

April 8, 9 & 10 - VIRGINIA
Richmond AV Society
Judged Show/Sale
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
1800 Lakeside Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23228
Sale: April 8: 1pm- 5pm
April 9: 9am – 5pm
April 10: 9am – 4pm
Show: April 9: 1pm-5pm
April 10: 9am-3pm
Free Admission to Show/Sale
Info: Sharon Long
804-740-5322
Email: slong15781@aol.com

April 9 – ALABAMA
Early Bird Violet Club,
Plant Sale & Exhibit
April 9: 10am - 3pm
Birmingham Botanical Gardens
2612 Lane Park Road
Birmingham, AL 35223
(205) 414-3950

April 9 – CONNECTICUT
Thimble Islands AVS Show/Sale
Willoughby Wallace Library
146 Thimble Islands Road
Exit #56
Branford, CT
April 9: 10am - 3:30pm
Info: Madeline Clem
(203) 481-9455

April 9 & 10 – OHIO
Cincinnati & Dayton AV Societies
Annual Show/Sale
Eastgate Mall, 4601 Eastgate Blvd.
Cincinnati, OH 45245
Sat, Apr 9: Noon to 9pm
Sun, Apr 10: Noon to 6pm
Info: Penny at pennypwic@aol.com
(859) 240-9057
www.cincyavs.org

April 9 & 10 - LOUISIANA
Sundowners AV Society
36th Annual Show/ Sale
Baton Rouge Garden Center
7950 Independence Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA
April 9: 1pm-5pm
April 10: 11am-3pm
Info: George Ramirez
(985) 384-0309
Email: susiesmith@live.com

April 11 & 12 – NEW JERSEY
African Violet Club of Morris County
Annual Judged Show/Plant Sale
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
353 East Hanover Avenue
Morristown, NJ 07962
April 11 – 1:30 pm-4pm
April 12- 11am-3pm
Info: Jill Fischer
Email: HF.JG.Fischer@comcast.net

April 15 & 16 - TENNESSEE
Memphis AVS Spring Show/Sale
Both Days: 9am - 4pm
Central Christian Church
531 South McLean Blvd
Corner of McLean and Peabody.
Email: bakerbethrn@gmail.com
Beth Baker (901)-550-7860
https://www.facebook.com/memphisavs

April 15 & 16 – NEW JERSEY
Bergen County AVS
59th Annual Judged Show/Sale
Old North Reformed Church
120 Washington Avenue
Dumont, NJ 07628
April 15: 3pm - 9 pm
April 16: 9am - 3 pm
Sharon Lynch (201) 784-9501
violetmom@optonline.net
Free Admission

April 16 & 17 – MISSOURI
Sho-Me African Violet Club
31st Annual Judged Show/Sale
Loose Park Garden Center
51st Street and Wornall
Kansas City, MO
Saturday, Apr. 16 - 9am – 3pm
Sunday, Apr. 17 - 10am - 3pm
Info: kskd1@juno.com

April 16 & 17 - MISSOURI
Metropolitan St. Louis AV Council
Annual Show/Sale
Missouri Botanical Garden
4344 Shaw Blvd, St. Louis, MO
9am to 5pm – Both Days
Linda Sumski
linda.mslavc@gmail.com
Website: mslavc.blogspot.com

April 23, 2016 – OREGON
Portland AV & MT Hood
Gesneriad Club
Sale/Display/Education Table
April 23: 10am – 3pm
Tabor Heights Methodist Church
6161 Stark Street
Portland, OR 97045

Info: (503) 442-1893
alicemaeblue@yahoo.com

April 23 & 24 - CONNECTICUT
Naugatonic AVS
Annual Judged Show/Sale
Homewood Suites by Hilton
6905 Main St
(Exit 53 off Merritt Parkway)
Stratford, CT 06614
April 23 2016 1pm - 4pm
April 24 2016 11am - 4pm
Info: Roger Wheeler
rogerwwheeler@yahoo.com

April 23 & 24 - VIRGINIA
Tidewater AVS Show/ Sale
April 23 - 1pm - 5pm
April 24 - 9am - 4pm
Norfolk Botanical Gardens,
Azalea Garden Rd., Norfolk, VA
Show Free
Admission to Garden Required.
Info: (757) 479-2115 or
kemts@cox.net

April 23 & 24 – NEW YORK
AVGSS of Syracuse, New York
Location: Beaver Lake Nature Center
8477 East Mud Lake Road
Baldwinsville, NY 13027
Show and Sales:
Saturday, 4/23 1pm – 6:00pm
Sunday, 4/24 10am – 4pm
There is a $4.00 parking fee.
Info: Linda Rowe
<Bloomingjungle@frontiernet.net>

April 29, 30, & May 1
PENNSYLVANIA
AVS of Springfield, PA
Annual Judged Show/Sale
Springfield Mall
1250 Baltimore Pike
Springfield, PA 19064
Sales: 4/29 - Noon – 9pm
4/30 - 10am – 9pm
5/1 - 11am – 4pm
Exhibit: 4/30 -1pm – 9pm
5/1 - 11am – 4pm
Leslie Swezey (484) 477-7535
hswezey@gmail.com
Alice Dulaney (610) 356-7459
adulaney@verizon.net

April 30 & May 1
NEW JERSEY
Garden State African Violet Club
65th Annual Judged Show & Sale
Mercer County Community College
1200 Old Trenton Rd
West Windsor, NJ
April 30- Noon to 4pm
May 1- 11am to 3pm
www.princetonol.com/groups/GSAVC
GSAVCmail@gmail.com
(732) 771-7117
Free Admission

April 30 & May 1 - WISCONSIN
Oshkosh Violet Society
Judged Show & Sale
Sat April 30 - 10am - 4:30pm
Sun May 1 - 11:30am - 3:00pm
St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall
531 Knapp St.
Oshkosh, WI 54902
Email: kevin_degner@sbcglobal.net
Kevin 920-426-3764

May 7 - WISCONSIN
Crosstown AVC
Annual Spring Sale
Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave
Madison, WI 53704
Hours: 9am - 4pm
Info: Alice Peterson
(608) 850-9740
Email:peters56@tds.net

May 7
BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA
Vancouver AV & Gesneriad Society
Annual Show/Sale
Floral Hall, VanDusen Garden
5251 Oak St., Vancouver, BC
1:00pm - 4 pm
Info: Iain James
Email: jhoya02@shaw.ca

AVSA 2016 Convention Souvenir Book Ads

This year's convention is in Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 29 to June 5, 2016. The theme is: "Violets Color the Land of Enchantment."

Ads can be well wishes or advertising which will help defray costs. Ads are an excellent way to promote your organization.

The maximum size of a full-page ad is 8" high x 5" wide, a half-page is 4" high x 5" wide and a quarter-page is 2" high x 5" wide. The rates for the ads are: quarter-page $30.00, half-page $50.00 and a full-page ad is $90.00, US dollars (USD). All inside ads will be in black and white. We also offer three full-page ads placed on the inside front cover, inside back cover and outside back cover for $125.00 USD, printed in black and white, or $150.00 USD, printed in color. Only cover pages in color.

To purchase an ad, please contact Mark Whitmer, Souvenir Book Chair, 111472 S. 4750 Road, Muldrow, OK 74948 or email shermarkw@cox.net. The deadline for all ads is April 21, 2016. Camera-ready copy is preferred (PDF or Word doc or jpeg file).

Checks or money orders in USD should be made payable to Albuquerque Violet Club. Please send your check or money order to: JoEllen Bowden, Albuquerque African Violet Club Treasurer, 407 La Veta Drive NE, Albuquerque, NM 87108.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Back from the (almost) dead

By Ruth Coulson, From her ENewsletter *The African Violet Way*

African violets are truly tough little plants. I can't imagine how they ever got the reputation of being difficult. They will put up with all sorts of abuse and still come back eventually if you catch them in time.

Some considerable time ago I put a couple of leaves of the semiminiature 'Rob's Slap Happy' in a glass of water to keep so I could plant them "tomorrow."

Turned out that tomorrow was a really long time in coming.

The leaves had not only rooted, they had produced a handful of baby plants. The glass of water had been topped up from time to time. It was only when I realized that these two leaves were my only scraps of 'Slap Happy' I had left, that I finally did something about them.

At that time the water was completely dried away, the original leaves were curled over, the little plantlets were yellow-colored because 'Slap Happy' has center variegation, and the roots were an inextricably entwined mass in the bottom of the glass. (See below left) This was in late November.

I took the leaves out and planted the whole thing in a small pot of ordinary African violet mix. By early February I was able to separate out the plantlets and pot them up. I only potted up three but there were obviously many more healthy little plantlets had I wanted them.

Now they are doing well. The variegation is showing only in the center leaves while the outer leaves are a good green color. (See right) I have removed three outer leaves because they were smaller than the others. The next row could go too, but I don't want to leave the plant with no green.

Yes, a really tough little plant.

And my growing method for this plant - a bit 'Slap Happy' would you say?

Mini Papa

Best Semiminiature

MAAVS 2015

Exhibited by: *Susan Arnao*

Hybridized by: *H. Pittman*

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

In Memory

Patt Harris

Longtime AVSA Member and promoter of African violets, Patt Harris, passed away on September 4, 2015. Patt was a very active grower of African violets, and she touched many lives with her kindness and friendly manner.

Patt promoted AVSA, and was proud to be a member of the Society. She was an excellent grower, and an ambassador for our society, encouraging others to join not only AVSA, but clubs on local levels.

She grew outstanding plants and was a friendly fixture at the national convention for many years. Patt touched many lives and her warm, welcoming presence is missed by all.

Sam McKenna

Sam McKenna, longtime African violet grower, passed away on December 26, 2015. Sam had been a member of four AVSA societies and won countless awards by each for her imaginative designs, lovely African violets, *Streptocarpus*, and sinningias.

Sam's life was marked by adventure, and she excelled at Sky Jump and waterskiing. She volunteered tirelessly at show luncheons and parties, making food, favors, and gifts to please all her friends. Life will be incomplete without her leadership and support in the African violet world.

Nesi and Mae Mendes

Northern California's African violet and gesneriad societies lost two of their long-time members in September, and November 2015, with the passing of Nesi and Mae Mendes. Both were in their nineties and had served and supported the African violet societies, and the Northern California Council (NCC) for decades.

Over time, both had served as Club and Council Officers, and as ambassadors for the hobby. Mae was an expert grower and designer, and Nesi was always helpful, and present, to do what needed to be done. Their caring, welcoming, personalities drew many new members and nurtured their new-found hobby. Their contributions to our hobby, our local affiliates, and Northern California Council will long be remembered.

Thad Holcomb

"Shared tirelessly." That simple phrase epitomizes Thad Holcomb who passed away December 28, 2015 in Reno, NV. He loved and hybridized *Streptocarpus,* along with hundreds of other gesneriad "cousins" that he grew to perfection. He shared his hybrids freely, and the table with his donated "streps" was always the first to be sold-out at club shows. With their prized Holcomb Hybrids safely in hand, guests hung around for hours for the opportunity to speak with Thad about his hybridizing objectives and growing techniques. He's left behind a legion of strep growers and a huge hole in our hearts. The horticulture world has lost one of its legends.

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS

Thumbprint (Under $25)

Two-Tone ($25-$49)

Multicolor ($50-$99)

Geneva ($100-$499)

Fantasy ($500-$999)

Chimera (Over-$1000)

Suckers/Side Shoots on African Violets

Originally printed in The African Violet, publication of the African Violet Association of Australia, Inc.

Suckers (or side shoots) that grow on African violets can be both a bane, and a boon, according to where they occur. Single-crowned standards and miniatures are best kept that way; therefore, the earlier you can detect and remove side shoots (suckers), the better. If they are allowed to grow unchecked, they will soon become multi-crowned plants that are congested and unattractive. Blooms will be sparse and symmetry will be gone forever.

Catch them if you can!

Initially, two little leaves may sprout from the plant at soil level. These are easy to remove as soon as they are noticed. When side shoots start to appear higher in the leaf exits, wait until it is certain that they are not the beginning of flower stems, that normally start with two little leaves. If in doubt, wait a week or two to be sure. When two more leaves appear, it is certain that you are dealing with a side shoot.

How to do this?

Experienced growers may find it quite easy to pinch outside shoots with their fingers; however several different implements may be used. These might be sucker pluckers, tweezers, fine manicure scissors, dental instruments, etc. It is sometimes quite a challenge to get a side shoot out in one piece as a tiny plantlet with no root system. To start such a plant is faster than leaf propagation and has a very good chance of being a replica of the parent. In fact, chimeras (pinwheels) are best reproduced this way.

It is well known among African violet growers that some chimeras are disinclined to sucker spontaneously at all. The remedy? They must be beheaded! This involves cutting out the center crown of the original plant and putting it down as one would a side shoot in a light, moist, growing medium, held in place with tooth picks and enclosed in a plastic bag until roots develop. This will probably take about three weeks.

Hide the mother!

The poor beheaded plant will be a sorry sight indeed and you will probably not want it on display. It can be moved to an out of the way place with moderate light and very soon the center cut will heal and grow several suckers. When these are cut and put down, as before, sometimes a second batch will grow. The majority of these are likely to be clones of the parent, but, as African violets can be contrary by nature, there is no guarantee this will be so.

What about trailers?

When starting off a trailer, either with a plantlet, a leaf, or a cutting, wait until new growth has commenced and then encourage suckering by nipping out the center two leaves. You want at least three branches from the main stem on two counts. The first is to fill the pot and the second is that it is a requirement in judging [trailers], should your plant be a show hopeful.

When the center has gone...

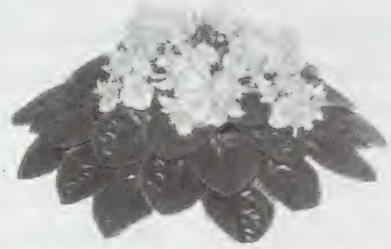
Sometimes, due to chemical injury, disease, or pests, a single-crowned plant's center may be destroyed. In an attempt to repair its own injury, it is likely to send up multiple suckers. Even when one is removed, usually the result is a deformed, uneven growth pattern. It is quicker to take one healthy sucker and restart the variety, discarding the rest of the plant. And, you can save a leaf for 'insurance.'

The Stress Factor

There are conditions regarded as stressors that may include unwanted suckering. Sometimes,

due to temperature extremes or intervention (disbudding) some plants seem to sucker heavily as if trying to save themselves. If growing for show, be extra vigilant in removing these, or your plant will quickly grow out of shape and lessen its chances of doing well in the show. Some varieties will be nothing but a nuisance, insisting on growing numerous side shoots, or extra crowns, seemingly overnight!

You must decide if the effort is really worth trying to tame these rebels. Some of us tried to grow 'Chantaspring' as a micro-miniature when it was first introduced, as this was our understanding. It soon became quite apparent that even if this might have been an option in a cooler climate, this was not so here as the removal of the tiny new growths in the axils would have tested the patience of the most dedicated grower. So we opted to 'let it go' and surprisingly, it does grow very nicely as a trailer and loses none of its flowering qualities. The strong yellow color of the blooms on maturity is a sight to behold. Grooming African violets has several facets. Sorting out the sucker is just one of them!



Registration for Judging School for Students and Certificate Renewals at the Albuquerque Convention

An AVSA judging school will be held on Wednesday, June 1, 2016, for AVSA members who wish to take their first judge's school and for judges who wish to renew their certificates. The lecture will be from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon and must be attended in order to take the exam. The test begins at 2:00 p.m. The registration fee is $10.00 payable to AVSA. **AVSA membership cards must be presented at the door. Proof of three blue ribbons is required to take the test but not to audit the school.**

Name _____

AVSA Membership # _____

Address _____

Email Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number_____

Judging Status: Student (1st exam) ____ Student Renewal ____ Advanced ____ Auditing ____

Pat Hancock will be the teacher. Copy, complete and email (preferred) or snail mail the form (do not send payment) to Pat's assistant: Karen Cenci, 6070 Bridgehaven Dr., Milford, Ohio 45150; Phone: 513-325-0395; email: kcenci@hotmail.com

The registration fee of **$10.00** applies to all who attend the judging school to take the test or to audit the class. Your **check needs to be sent to the AVSA Office, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702. Please note on your check that this fee is for the judging school in Albuquerque.**

The test will be based on the latest edition of the AVSA Handbook, 12th Edition, revised in 2011, plus any updates.

Registration and payment for the judging school must be received by April 29, 2016.

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Morgan's Pu Yi

Exhibited by: *Bob Clark*

Hybridized by: *C. Eros*

Semiminiature

Your Violet Club...a Living, Growing System

By Betty Ferguson

All systems have certain characteristics in common... Nonliving systems include heating and air conditioning systems, electrical systems, computer systems, radar systems, weather, the solar system and so on. Living systems include animals, people, organizations, communities, nations and the world.[1]

A system is made up of a collection of smaller, interacting components. Likewise, a group (or an African violet club) may be defined as two or more individuals who are connected to one another by dynamic, living social relationships, which include status, roles, values, and goals, expectations and rules.

Groups tend to either emerge spontaneously or they are deliberately formed and planned. Emergent groups may include bystanders at a crime scene, checkout lines in supermarkets or audiences at entertainment events. Planned groups include religious congregations, labor unions, the AVSA, your local African violet club, the Dixie African Violet Society, and the annual Dixie convention.

Additionally, groups are often categorized as either primary or secondary. Primary groups are solid, small, long-term groups characterized by face-to-face interaction and interdependence. In more primitive societies, individuals only belonged to primary groups - families, friendships, tribes, and communities. As societies became more complex, so did groups and secondary groups were formed. These structured groups tend to be larger, more formal, shorter in duration, task oriented, and less psychologically influential than primary groups. They include committees, boards, juries, self-help groups, African violet clubs. Secondary groups normally operate under a contract or a set of by-laws that determine and describe acceptable procedures and activities. They often utilize a flowchart indicating who has more authority than others and how sub-groups are related.

Groups usually exist for a reason - spiritual training, companionship, furthering the knowledge of African violets. This reason is normally stated as an organization's mission statement.

Groups vary greatly in their reasons for existence and general dynamics, but researchers have found that like other living organisms, groups move through a predictable series of life stages. Psychologist, professor, and writer Bruce Tuckman describes these stages as storming, forming, norming, performing, and adjourning.

The forming stage of your local African violet society may have occurred when an individual decided to form a club at a local recreational center or in his home. Everyone was welcome. The mood was positive and expectant. Group members were polite and conversation revolved around African violets. They wondered what a club might hold for them personally. They expected the individual forming the group to provide any leadership. This informal stage may have lasted for only one meeting.

The second stage, storming, involved delegation of tasks. Members also attended to their social relationships within the group in order to create a niche for themselves and to ensure that their own primary purpose in joining the group was met. Approval, acceptance, respect or desire for domination are elemental in the early stages of groups. Conflict and disagreement probably arose or were felt as discussion addressed which route to take, but members agreed to pursue avenues they didn't particularly like out of the desire for organization and structure and to be accepted. Some members may have felt overwhelmed with the amount of work in store. Others may have resisted assigned tasks. This stage was likely experienced as an emotional roller coaster as members attempted unfamiliar tasks without the benefit of established procedures or established relationships. Many groups do not survive this stage.

Gradually, maybe with some setbacks, your club moved into the third stage, norming, in which trust and personal friendships developed. Ideas, suggestions and feedback among members became the norm. Individual skills and talents became more apparent. Support and assistance among members grew. Constructive criticism was accepted.

Performing, the fourth stage, began as the club moved into actual productivity. During this working phase, tasks became familiar, and your club moved toward their mission. Through club programs, shows and friendships, you now perform the tasks of educating your members and the public on the care, propagation and hybridization of African violets. Roles and responsibilities are clear and accepted. Club members are competent and able to make effective decisions autonomously. Dissent is an expected element and, if channeled through means acceptable to the club, it is healthy. When a threat occurs from without or within the club, you may resort to an earlier developmental stage. This is a normal happening within even successful, high-performing organizations.

Many of our African violet clubs are struggling with threats to their survival - competition from outside interests such as a busy society and easily information from the Internet. Internal threats include aging and working members, unresolved conflict among members, and detrimental roles played by club members. The excitement of the early romance has worn thin and boredom is often the norm in mature clubs.

Even AVSA has been forced back into the storming stage to address its dwindling membership. Unless the threats are acknowledged and dealt with, the group faces Tuckman's last stage - that of adjourning. In a task group, adjournment is an expected and healthy stage. The mission and tasks are completed. The members disengage as planned and move into new tasks. However, our African violet societies haven't planned toward a final phase of dissolution. Our species still require protection. New growers still kill their plants and even experienced growers believe a drop of water on a leaf is the worst of offenses. Current members rely on their clubs and one another for social and educational support.

Rather than allowing your club to move into or complete the stage of adjourning, you can ensure that it remains dynamic and alive. Encourage your members to return to earlier group stages and explore for ways to successfully deal with your club's threats and challenges.

Suggestions for club programs or newsletter articles:

- A presentation of the history of the club by a charter member.
- Review your club's mission statement. Discuss how that mission is being fulfilled and can be better fulfilled and discuss corrective steps the club should be taking. Develop a plan of action with individual tasks and follow up on the process.
- Ask members to discuss their personal needs regarding your club. Examples might include the need for achievement, affiliation, opportunity to use talents or skills, information about growing.
- Discuss the stages of groups and where your club is currently functioning.
- One way AVSA is addressing modern threats to the Society is by utilizing the Internet. Discuss a way of using the Internet to overcome some of your club's challenges.
- Discuss what your club would be like if things were going the way you want them to go. What are the club's priorities for improvement? Remind members that when a club gets off track, it has the ability to self-correct and get back on track.

s1. "Understanding The Characteristics of Living Systems," *Codynamics: The New Way to Think and Work Together* http://www.codynamics.net/systems.htm

From *The Dixie News*, Mary Lou Harden, Editor

An Education Tool in Container Garden Design

By Karyn Cichocki
Lafayette, NJ

I've been doing design in African Violet shows since1983 and Gesneriad shows since 1995. From a designer's point of view I find writing out the cards indicating what plant material is used in the design or planting a nuisance. But my friend, Jill Fischer, said that this is a good tool for both visitors to the show and fellow exhibitors, educating them as to different ways to use the plants. I've always just listed the plant material on the required 3x5 card, but Jill does wonderful drawings for her plantings. She actually draws the plants and put the names next to the drawing. I now do this, because I know that I've seen plants used in a container garden and couldn't figure out which plant was which. Of course my drawings aren't as detailed as Jill's, but I do draw an outline of the container, then put the plants in the spot they are planted with their name next to them. If your drawing skills aren't that good, then just put a dot where the plant is and then the plant name next to the dot or even an arrow from the name to the dot. Because I grow lots of gesneriads, I almost use them exclusively in my plantings, using either one or more African violets if for a violet show, and some other bloom gesneriad for the gesneriad show.

When planting container gardens, you want to make sure that you have a tree, shrub and then low growing plant, so that you have a transition from the height of your planting to the lowest point. I will take a tray and shop from my plant stands and make a selection plants that have a variety of height, color and texture, usually more than I really need. I usually start with the tree and then work myself down to the lowest part of the planting. Plain peat moss is used as my soil, then I don't have to pick out perlite. I try to remove as much of the soil and perlite from the root systems of the plants I'm using, gently swishing them in a bowl of warm water. Then the roots are wrapped in long fiber sphagnum moss, this keeps the roots moist, without having to water the planting and causing possible leakage in a natural garden, or over watering in a terrarium or dish garden. Once I have finished the planting of the container, then I'm ready to finish it with pits of wood, rock and moss to make it look more like a natural planting. I sometimes will put a path in the planting using small stones. I have used pieces of slate, glued together with silicon seal to create a small stone wall, which is great to have a creeping plant hanging over.

I don't keep my plantings growing, they are usually planted right before show and then disassembled after the show, so there isn't a problem with using plants that might have different watering requirements. You do have to keep in mind that plants that have higher humidity requirements should only be used in a terrarium. All your containers should be clean and the color of the container should be neutral so it doesn't draw the eye away from your planting. As a judge, there is nothing worse than having to deduct points from a wonder planting with a great landscape, when either the glass is dirty or cloudy or the dish is an outrageous color.

I hope that this helps you and that you have success in the planting of your next container garden.

Who Can Be a Judges' Clerk?

By Mickey Womack

Last year, I had the opportunity to participate in the Lone Star State Show as a Judges' Clerk. I was placed with a panel of judges that consisted of Advanced, Senior, and Master Judges. A little intimidating for a hobby grower.

Each plant was fairly judged against a "set" standard, not against other plants in the room. Each plant was admired for it's particular qualities.

As a hobby grower, it can be frightening to enter a show. If this is a fear of yours, clerk a show! Each plant is appreciated for it's own qualities, and judged accordingly. One of the purposes of the show is to challenge and encourage club members to grow better plants. You will be encouraged by the judges' acknowledgment of the beauty of each plant, and challenged by the things the judges note for improvement.

Who can be a Judges' clerk? Anyone who has the desire to learn more about violets and participate in the inner workings of an African violet show can be a clerk. It's easy, it's fun, and it's free! And, it's the best way to learn about African violets from the experts.

What is a judges' clerk? An AVSA Standard Show is sponsored by one or more AVSA affiliate clubs, conforming to the requirements set forth in the AVSA Scale of Points, and is judged by AVSA Judges. Shows are judged to improve their overall quality.

The Judges' committee for that Show determines how many judges are needed. The judges are divided into panels, or teams, and assigned different classes to judge. This way, there are multiple teams judging various areas of the show, all at the same time.

Each panel of judges is responsible for assigning a point value to the show plant based on "merit." The plants are judged only against a set standard for African violets, and not against another plant. Thus, the individual participant is competing against himself, not every grower entering in the show. Plants are judged for beauty, not flaws.

During judging, the judges need 'helpers,' or clerks. The judges can't leave the area to get extra pens, or have questions answered, so the clerk is there to assist them.

What is the role of a judges clerk? There are two clerks per panel of judges. One clerk's primary responsibility is to record the awards on the entry sheets when decided on by the judges.

The second clerk's primary responsibility is to place the ribbons and awards. As the judges tell Clerk #1 what ribbon and/or award to give each plant, Clerk #2 goes to the awards table and collects the ribbons, placing them next to each plant. In addition to these primary responsibilities, the clerks might be asked to retrieve pens, pencils, erasers, show schedules, water, etc. The clerks are there to help the judges' as in confirming MVL descriptions, names, classifications, or to retrieve the Show Chairman.

Clerks should know the basic rules of the show as listed in the Show Schedule. The clerks should know where the various classes are located in the showroom, and which classes their panel will judge. This information is readily available from the judges' chairman, and they are happy to help you familiarize yourself with the show layout and assignments.

Where do clerks come from? Anyone can be a clerk. We have beginners, amateur growers, hobby growers, commercial growers, and Master violet growers who clerk. What better way to learn about the different varieties, sizes, colors, and habits of violets and gesneriads? And, the different perspective each judge has while looking at the plant, brings to light all the things we can learn about them.

When are clerks needed? Every AVSA-judged show needs clerks. These helpers are the unsung heroes of our shows. The clerk is there while the plants are being judged, and then their job is over. It's a great way to get your "feet wet" helping with an African violet show and learn a lot about our hobby. So, when is your next show? **Will you be a clerk?**

Reprinted from Lonestar AVC Newsletter

Our Designing Ways

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Jump Blues
Mel Grice

Autumn Leaves
Fran Russom

Cool Jazz
Fran Russom

Summertime
Linda Sumski

Cotton Candy
Linda Sumski

Sweet 'n' Spicy
Glenda Williams

Star Dust
Mel Grice

Rhythm and Blues
Glenda Williams

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO AVSA BYLAWS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following proposed amendments to AVSA Bylaws Articles IV Officers and Their Duties, VII Board of Directors and VIII Executive Committee will be voted on at the AVSA 2016 Annual Convention at Albuquerque, NM.

Mary Lou Harden, Chair, AVSA Bylaws Committee
Sue Ramser
Ruth Goeke
Lynne Wilson
Bob Green

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLES IV, VII AND VIII OF AVSA BYLAWS

NOTE: Deletions are shown by strike-throughs. New language is shown by underlining.

Article IV

Officers and Their Duties

Section 1

Elected Officers:

The elected officers of this Society shall fulfill the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority of the Society. The elected officers of this Society shall be:

1. **PRESIDENT:** shall have general superintendence of the affairs of the Society, preside at meetings of the Society, Board of Directors, and Executive Committee; keep informed of all work of the Society and make reports thereon as may be required; appoint all committee chairs except the Nominating Committee; fill all vacancies in committee chairmanships during his/her term; be a member ex-officio of all committees except the Nominating; ~~oversee (a) an editor who shall be responsible for the preparation and issuance of the **AVM** as authorized by the Board of Directors and (b) an office manager and~~ closely monitor the AVSA office and all ~~paid personnel~~ employees; and perform other duties necessary in the best interest of the Society. The President may designate a member of the Board of Directors to travel on his/her behalf if he/she deems it expedient and in the best interest of the Society.

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NOTE: In the proposed Bylaw amendments as to duties of the Treasurer, for ease of reading we are listing the duties of the Treasurer in line-by-line bullet form. Therefore, for comparison, you will first see below the Treasurer's duties as published in the current AVSA Bylaws, followed by the proposed amendments with regard to the Treasurer's duties.

Current Bylaws, Article IV, Section 1 - 6 TREASURER

6. **TREASURER:** shall be responsible for the safe keeping of the Society funds and payment of bills by checks; send a record of all checks drawn on Society funds to the President monthly; keep an accurate written record of all monies received and disbursed; render financial reports as the Board of Directors may require; and assist the Finance Committee Chair in the preparation of the annual budget in detail. He/she shall be bonded in the amount set by the Board of Directors and shall submit all records related to the treasury for financial review annually by an account-

ant selected by the Executive Committee. The report shall be given to the members of the Board of Directors for adoption at each annual meeting.

Proposed Article IV, Section 1 - 6 TREASURER

6. **TREASURER:** shall have general financial oversight of the finances of the Society, working closely with the AVSA Finance Committee and the AVSA Office Manager, who shall have the day-to-day responsibility for financial matters, including receipt and deposit of funds, payment of bills and salaries, bookkeeping, and weekly reporting to the Treasurer, the President and the AVSA Finance Committee Chair:
   - ensure that appropriate financial systems and controls are in place;
   - manage bank accounts;
   - ensure appropriate record-keeping and compliance with state and federal government regulations;
   - ensure the safe keeping of the Society funds and payment of bills;
   - render regular financial reports to the President and the Board of Directors on the Society's financial position;
   - assist the Finance Committee Chair in the preparation of the annual budget and annual financial statement;
   - ensure use of special funds complies with conditions set by the funding bodies;
   - advise on the Society's reserves and investment policy;
   - he/she shall be bonded in the amount set by the Board of Directors;
   - prepare and submit all financial accounts for audit (financial review) annually by an accountant selected by the Executive Committee, the report to be given to the members of the Board of Directors for adoption at each annual meeting.
   - ensure everyone handling money keeps proper records and documentation;
   - ensure required insurance is in place;

Article VII

Board of Directors

Section 1

Composition

The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers, the fifteen (15) directors, the chairs of the standing committees and the Immediate Past President, provided that, that person has completed the full term as President of the Society. Otherwise the President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may appoint another Past President to serve in that capacity. This Board shall:

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8. ~~Oversee an editor who shall be responsible for the preparation and issuance of the AVM as authorized by the Board of Directors.~~ Approve the salaries of the editor and the office manager, as well as any other persons who are now or may hereafter be employed, either on a temporary or permanent basis, upon the recommendation of the Salary Committee.

Section 4

Employees

~~1. An administrative coordinator and editor may be employed by the Executive Committee with the terms of employment and salary determined by the Board of Directors.~~

1. Office Manager, whose duties shall include, but not be limited to:
   a. provide diversified administrative support for Executive Committee.
   b. supervise the efficient management of the AVSA business office, operating within the annual budget as approved by the Board.
   c. complete necessary forms for state and

federal governments and file all government forms and monies due at the designated time.

d. Receive, and maintain records of, all payments of any kind, whether for purchases, payment of dues, awards and awards ribbons, and donations of any kind, including those designated to special funds, make bank deposits, and pay all bills and salaries.
e. receive and process all incoming and outgoing mail, e-mail and telephone inquiries.
f. mail all correspondence issued by the office, or by Board members as requested, retaining a copy for the files.
g. maintain a filing system to retain records of correspondence, under the direction of the Secretary.
h. stock and maintain the office furniture, equipment and supplies.
i. copy reports and other material necessary for Board meetings
j. report monthly to the Treasurer, the President and Finance Committee Chair as to all money receipts, invoices, payments made and all other financial information.
k. responsibly manage the office bank account, under the direction of the Treasurer.
l. maintain a petty cash box, maintaining a record of all transactions.
m. report to the President any issues that may compromise the security of the office, including failure of the alarm system or insecure practices by any AVSA members or employees using the office facilities.
n. make weekly and monthly data backups of the office computers.
o. confer with and keep the President informed at all times of the activities of the office and its staff.
p. Additional duties and responsibilities of the Office Manager are listed in the AVSA's Policies & Procedure Manual.

2. Editor of the African Violet Magazine, whose duties shall include, but not be limited to:
   a. publish six (6) issues of the AVM annually, and any other publications authorized by the Board.
   b. keep the First Vice President informed of the activities of his/her position.
   c. Additional duties and responsibilities of the Editor are listed in the AVSA's Policies & Procedure Manual.

Article VIII

Executive Committee

++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++

1. ++++++++++++++
2. ++++++++++++++

3. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to hire an Editor and an Office Manager, as well as such other employees who from time to time may be deemed necessary, and shall set the terms of employment and salary, with approval by the Board of Directors and upon the recommendation of the Salary Committee.

RATIONALE:

To streamline the responsibilities of the Treasurer and the Finance Committee and to bring into alignment and maintain consistency with the way funds are handled. To more specifically define the duties of the Treasurer, Office Manager, President and Board of Directors as to the handling of funds.

Secretarial edits:

Page 5 – Article III – Title – "Incapacitation"
Page 7 – Article V – Section 5 – chair of the "Nominating" Committee – for consistency
Page 9 - Article VII – 3rd line – insert "that" before person
Page 9 – Article VII - #3 – "officers" (plural)
Page 10 – Article VIII - #5 first line – "made" not "make"
Page 15 – 4th line – 501(c)(3)

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Bob Serbin

Exhibited by: *Donna Brining*

Hybridized by: *J. Brownlie*

Standard

Albuquerque 2016 Convention Tours

By Ann L. Jones

Discover the magic of the Land of Enchantment while on the 2016 New Mexico Convention Tours.

Monday's tour is in Santa Fe, a city visited by over a million people each year. The climate is great for outdoor activities such as skiing, sledding, and hiking. The city is rich in history and culture.

The Plaza in Santa Fe serves as the center for tourism, with points of interest located within walking distance. The Palace of the Governors, Spain's 17th century government site, dominates one side of the Plaza. It now serves as New Mexico's History Museum, featuring collections of artifacts; including Kit Carson, Rough Riders, Civil War in New Mexico, and 18th century furniture.

Only Native American vendors, on blankets under the portal of the Palace of the Governors, producing jewelry and other authentic, hand-crafted items are permitted to sell there. (*Please don't try to take photos here as the vendors don't allow it.*)

A short distance from the Plaza is the La Fonda Hotel. It was purchased in 1925 by the Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, and operated as one of their Harvey Houses. It is now locally owned. The colorful furniture is hand carved and hand painted. La Fonda is a Pueblo style building with heavy wood beams, hand-crafted chandeliers, and copper and tin lighting fixtures. La Plazuela, an enclosed courtyard restaurant at the La Fonda Hotel, serves traditional New Mexico and Nuevo Latino dinners. La Fiesta Lounge and the Bell Tower Bar are also located in the La Fonda Hotel.

The Miraculous Staircase, located in the Loretta Chapel, is a short walk from the Plaza. The Chapel was designed by a French architect who died suddenly, before the Chapel was completed in 1878. The design left no room for a staircase to the choir loft. Carpenters who were consulted concluded that the only solution would be a ladder. The Catholic Sisters of Loretto prayed a Novena to St Joseph that the problem be solved. On the ninth day, the last day of the Novena, a man riding a donkey and carrying a tool box appeared at the Chapel. He was looking for employment. The Sisters of Loretto considered this an answer to their prayers. He worked on the staircase for several months and when completed, disappeared suddenly, without being paid. The mysteries surrounding this staircase include the wood it was crafted from, which was not from New Mexico. Whether the story is true or not, the staircase with two complete 360° turns, containing no center support, and built without nails, and only wooden pegs, was an engineering feat for the time and still perplexes experts today. Many believe that it was St. Joseph that built it. The Chapel, now owned by a private company, charges an entrance fee. The Miraculous Staircase has been the subject of many articles, television specials, and movies.

Catholic Churches were a significant part of the culture, history, and development in the Southwest. The San Miguel Chapel, one block south of the Loretto Chapel, was built in 1610 by the Tlazcalan Indians, arriving from Mexico in 1598. The church claims to be the oldest in the United States. The church and small gift shop are open to the public on weekdays.

The Cathedral of St Francis of Assisi, which is east of the Plaza, was built by French and Italian masons from local yellow limestone blocks, on the site of an older church in the late 1800's. A small chapel from the older church remains. The imported stain glass windows travelled by ship and covered wagon to Santa Fe. The construction of the church was partially recorded in the fictionalized "Death Comes to the Archbishop" by Willa Cathar.

Santa Fe is an art center with a high concentration of artists. It is the third largest art market in the United States. One half mile on Canyon Road has the highest number of galleries in the city. In addition, there are restaurants, and shops and boutiques that carry high-end, hand-crafted, and unique items, including jewelry. The Free Santa Fe Pick Up Shuttle is presently scheduled every fifteen minutes

to Canyon Road from the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi, a few blocks from the Loretto Chapel.

Back in Albuquerque, the Sandia Peak Tramway (**Tuesday's tour**) is the longest aerial tram in the world. It climbs from an elevation of 6,559 feet to the top at 10,378 feet, travelling 2.7 miles. As the tram climbs, it travels above rugged mountain terrain, rock formations, cliffs, and deep canyons. An impressive 11,000 square miles can be seen from the peak. Temperatures can vary by twenty to thirty degrees from Albuquerque to the peak. It is advisable to carry a warm sweater or jacket.

The High Finance Restaurant, located at the peak, has amazing views from almost any table, while a panoramic view of Albuquerque can be seen from Sandiago's Restaurant at the base of the Tram.

Wednesday's tour is in Historic Old Town Albuquerque, the cultural center having five museums and over 100 shops and galleries. Old Town, founded in 1706, is replete with history and lore. For example, the homes were built around a plaza with the San Felipe de Neri church on the north side. During raids by the Indians, the women and children took refuge in the church, the cattle were sheltered by the homes that abutted against each other in the square, and the men were in the fields guarding and protecting the settlement. Now, the Plaza is the center of events throughout the year. Walking around Old Town, shopping, and dining in one of the many restaurants, is pleasant experience.

Palm's Trading Company, a great place to explore Native American art, is located in the Old Town district, a short drive from the Plaza. The company purchases handcrafted items directly from the different Pueblo artisans and offers them at comparably low prices. (It is usually half of the ticket price unless indicated as net.) The store is an ideal source to purchase unique gifts or inexpensive mementos. Palms Trading Company stocks authentic Native American pottery, jewelry, moccasins, rugs, baskets, arrows, etc. The knowledgeable staff answers questions about specific items, and may also offer background information on the art of the Pueblos, and the symbols used by the Native Americans and their myths.

A twelve-screen movie theatre, restaurants, art galleries, shops and lounges are located in downtown Albuquerque. The Civic Plaza and the historic Kimo Theatre schedule a variety of entertaining events.

The air is filled with the calming fragrance of lavender in June until mid July at the Los Poblanos Historic Inn and Organic Farm. On **Thursday morning's tour**, peacocks may be walking by while honeybees are busily buzzing from blossom to blossom, gathering pollen. This honey is a high quality product which retains a faint hint of lavender in the taste. Lavender was used in hospitals during World War I and is currently being tested for medical uses. It is used in soaps, cosmetics, perfumes, potpouri, flavorings in cooking, and decorating. Essential oil is extracted from the lavender flowers on the Organic Farm for use in the unique products sold in the Farm store. Lectures on growing and using lavender are also offered. The historic inn and organic farm present a great opportunity for taking memorable photographs.

Imagine witnessing a murder committed in your presence while having a four course dinner at a luxury hotel. This is the exciting experience offered on **Friday night** at the *Mystery at the Marriot* dinner as the pseudo crime event begins. Actors who promote the plot are integrated among the diners. Anyone can be the victim or the suspect – even you or your dinner partners. Diners can test their detective skills by freely interrogating each other in an effort to solve the mystery. The one who finds the solution or is the nearest to resolving the mystery is awarded a prize.

What is it like riding in a hot air balloon? Ascension is gradual and graceful. The balloon travels at the same speed as the wind, and doesn't seem to be moving unless the wind changes speed, or the balloon changes altitude. There is a peaceful feeling of floating, drifting as the majestic landscape glides beneath. It is silent except for the occasional whooshing sound of the burner and the conversation of the riders. Balloon rides are scheduled early in the morning when the wind is usually calm. Landings can be a bit bumpy, but the experienced pilot handles them with expertise. A ride in a hot air balloon is an unforgettable experience.

The AVSA 2016 Convention and Show will be a fascinating and memorable experience for all, in the Land of Enchantment.

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Orchard's Bumble Magnet

Exhibited by: *Richard Nicholas*

Hybridized by: *R. Wilson*

Miniature

Rob's Slap Happy

Exhibited by:
Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by:
R. Robinson
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Lovestruck

Exhibited by:
Drew Norris
Hybridized by:
L Lyon Greenhouses
Standard Trailer

Haloing

By Sue Haffner

Yellow "halos" can form on the margins of older leaves in the outer rows on African violets. This happens because nitrogen is what is referred to as a mobile nutrient. If the plant in question cannot obtain enough nitrogen from the soil, nitrogen will be taken from older growth to supply the growing point. In this case, the growing point outranks the mature foliage. (Botanists refer to this as "apical dominance".) The yellow occurs from the migration of the nitrogen out of the leaf and, sadly, it cannot be replaced. The soilless mixes that many of us use for our violets do not necessarily have the nutrient-holding capacity for large plants, and this needs to be compensated for.

Some growers like to use fish emulsion for their violets. A dose every couple of weeks encourages beautiful foliage and, used in combination with regular inorganic feedings, can prevent nutrient leaching from the outer leaves.

From the *CA Council News*

Why Use Bleach?

By Cheryl Salatino

Bleach is an important part of potting preparation and clean-up. Liquid chlorine bleach is used for sanitizing both pots and tools. When reusing pots or preparing new ones, it is best to wash them thoroughly in a 1/3 bleach and 2/3 warm water solution. You will prevent the spread of any fungus or other undesirable diseases. It is also a good practice to clean your light stand trays at least once per year with a bleach solution to remove any stains, algae, or residue.

Always wear gloves when using a bleach solution. Bleach can dry out or irritate your skin.

From *Ye Bay Stater*, publication of the Bay State AVS

Honor Your Society Leaders

Thank you for your help and support!

John Carter - Immediate Past President AVSA

You have seen them at every meeting, show, sale or event associated with your violet society. They are the first to arrive and the last ones out the door. They are doing this because they care about the society and want to see it succeed. Can you help them? Will you help them?

Many of us are seeing the results of age upon our bodies. We do not have the strength or ability to do physical activities that we once did. Some of us have busy schedules and may not be able to commit that we will be at a given meeting. How can you help and recognize these hard working leaders?

I suggest that you start with a sincere "thank you" when you see them. Let them know you recognize and appreciate their hard work. Secondly, let them know you are willing to help, but describe the limitations that you have that might limit what you can do. You might be able to make phone calls, make cookies or help in some way that you had not considered before. There are a number of things that happen behind the scenes which could be within your abilities.

You can also honor these hard workers by -making a financial contribution in their honor to the AVSA Tinari Endowment Fund. Any amount of donation is helpful and will help insure the long term financial stability of AVSA. You can make a donation from the AVSA website or mail a check to the AVSA office (2375 North St, Beaumont, TX 77702) indicating the Tinari Endowment Fund on the memo line. Include a note indicating the person(s) that you wish to honor. Your contribution and person being honored will appear in a future *African Violet Magazine*.

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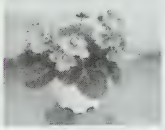

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Here are the five kinds of AV seeds we sell.
See details and order from *NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com.*

Standard. All-green foliage, 7"-12" at maturity, flowers have various colors and shapes.

Variegated. Foliage is variegated. Other characteristics are like Standard plants.

Fantasy. Like Standard plants except that most have fancy flowers (bi-colored, speckled, edged, double, etc).

Trailer. Plants have a trailer growth habit. Otherwise like Standard plants.

Miniature. Like Standard plants but smaller, 3"-7" at maturity.

NEW: Nadeau's AV Seed Kit!

The KIT has everything needed to successfully sow and germinate your AV seeds and grow the seedlings to transplant stage! It's the system we use to test the germination of the seeds we sell.
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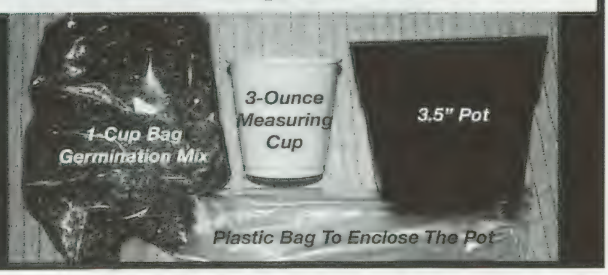

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Save the Wild Saintpaulia

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Purchase our 56-page manual **"How to Know and Grow Gesneriads"** for US$10 postpaid anywhere, or **join The Gesneriad Society** for one year for US$25 in USA, US$30 elsewhere. Go to www.gesneriadsociety.org or send check or credit card number with expirations date and CVV code to The Gesneriad Society, Dept AVM, PMB 637, 1122 E Pike Street, Seattle, WA 98122 USA. New members receive a copy of "How to Know and Grow Gesneriads," two back issues and the next four quarterly issues of our journal *Gesneriads*, a package of mixed gesneriad seeds, access to the world's largest source of gesneriad seed, and many other benefits.

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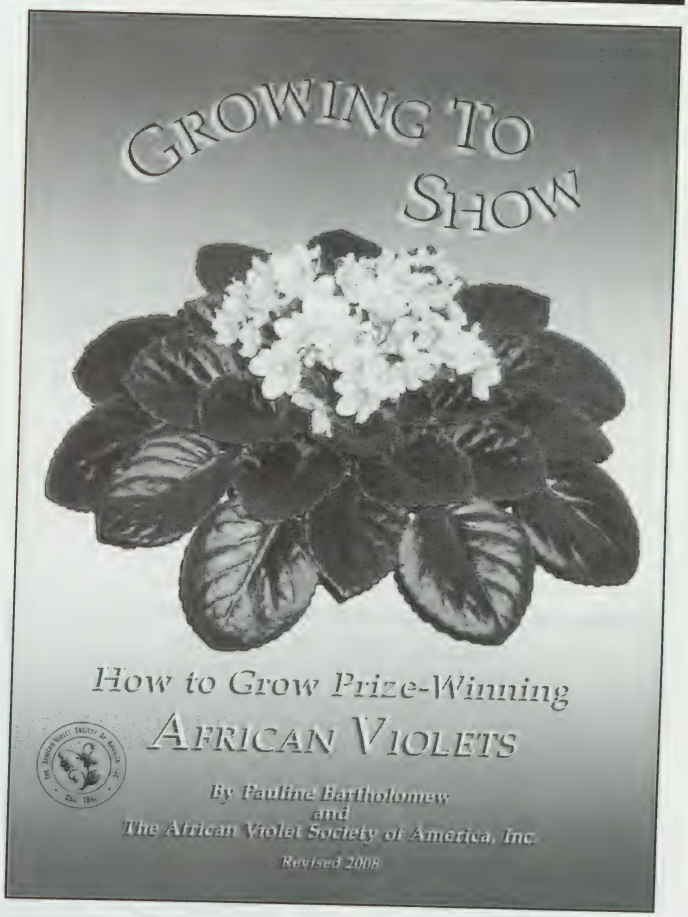

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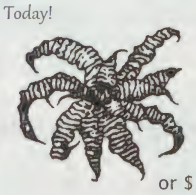

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African Violet

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Cajun's Dixie Pride

Exhibited by: **Mary Corondan**

Hybridized by: **B. Thibodeaux**

Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

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OFFICERS

Winston J. Goretsky, President
32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada T3L 2B2
email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Dr. Richard Nicholas, 1st Vice President
3113 Deerfield Dr., Denton, TX 76208
email: randanicho@aol.com

Sue Ramser, 2nd Vice President
2413 Martin, Wichita Falls, TX 76308
email: ramserwf@wf.net

Susan Anderson, 3rd Vice President
4040 E. Maldonado Dr., Phoenix AZ 85042
email: sanderson122@cox.net

Edna Rourke, Treasurer
99 Old Stratford Rd., Shelton, CT 06484
email: APapillon@aol.com

Mary Corondan, Secretary
434 Plumwood Way, McKinny, TX 75069
email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

John Carter, Immediate Past President
1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012
email: johntcarter@valornet.com

STAFF

Ruth Rumsey, Editor
2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702
email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Cindi Nofziger, Advertising Manager
1035 Lakewood Dr., Albany, OR 97321
email: ccnofziger@comcast.net

Lynne Wilson, Publications Chairman
645 Hudson Ave., Tampa, FL 33606
email: wilsonav@tampabay.rr.com

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

Howdy everyone,

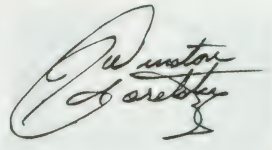
As you receive this issue of the African Violet Magazine, you'll either be on your way to convention, just returning or waiting to hear all about the fun in Albuquerque. It'll depend greatly on the postal service and whether you are able to attend the convention. I hope to see you there.

Spring has arrived much earlier than it usually does in Calgary, Alberta. I'm generally still shoveling snow until at least May. We've even had Canadian Geese that didn't bother flying south for the winter, I'm not sure if they're just getting lazier or maybe just enjoying a "stay-cation." In any event, I have truly appreciated the warmer weather and the chance to be outdoors for more than five minutes without the fear of frostbite.

Have you noticed that African violets seem to be able to tell what season it is? It's even more fascinating when the plants are sequestered in a basement, with no natural light and can't see outside to know what's happening beyond their growing area. When your growing area is able to maintain an even, consistent environment of temperature and humidity, then your plants are healthy and happy. This is one of the growing elements that we are seeming able to control as part of our culture. I notice that as September approaches and the weather cools down outdoors, my central heating will maintain the home at a constant temperature until around April. That's a solid nine months of consistency. In April, as the temperature increases, the furnace does not run as regularly and the temperature fluctuations in the home become variable as the plants begin to respond to those changes. Also, our water source is from the melting snow pack and glaciers of the mountain ranges west of our city. As the runoff begins in spring, the water is filled with all sorts of dissolved minerals and solids that cause turbidity, which the water treatment center has to stabilize by processing it. This process involves the introduction of various chemicals that remain in the water, which can affect the growth of plants. These chemicals are not generally harmful to people, but plants can be more sensitive and react in certain ways. Being aware of changes in our growing conditions, and other factors that influence our plant growth, can help us understand what modifications we need to make in order to supply the consistency that helps our plants grow to their best potential.

At our local shows and conventions, we see the results of many different growing conditions represented by the exhibits. This gives us the opportunity to talk to the exhibitors and ask them how they care for their plants. The discovery of sometimes the most obscure element or piece of information can make the difference between growing a good plant and growing a ***great*** plant.

Please take the opportunity to share your knowledge with others and don't feel shy about asking others about their techniques. We're all in this wonderful association because we love to grow African violets and enjoy the rewards that a beautiful African violet can bring to ourselves as well as others. Don't hoard your knowledge, collaborate!



Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Welcome to the first full-color edition of the *African Violet Magazine*. We have moved the printing of this publication to Houston, and with this new printing company there are no restrictions on the amount of color pages that we may produce. *(Of course, this means we will need more color submissions from our members).*

Also, our longtime typesetter, **Shirley Jones**, works for us exclusively now. Amy and I both appreciate her so much. Shirley is a hard worker, very creative, knowledgeable, and such a pleasure to work with.

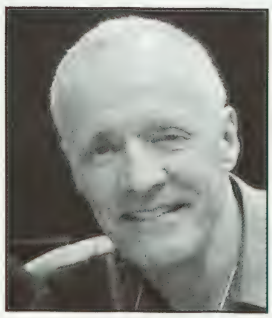
This is the first AVM issue to feature articles that have been entered in the "AVSA Article Contest." Articles entered, and included in the AVM will have the words, ***Contest Entry***, above the title. If you are not familiar with the contest, read about it in the Jan/Feb 2016 AVM on page 14, or check the AVSA website <avsa.org>. Also, a brief version of that article is on page 27 in this issue.

Pat Hancock created the Contest, to encourage more members and growers to write for the AVM. She knew how few article submissions there are these days. She also knows how our members love getting new plant leaves from our hybridizers, especially "New Introductions." What a great idea! After all the begging for new articles, and hearing complaints after I have reprinted from other publications; (which I will still do now and then, if needed), I am surprised by the amount of great articles I've been receiving. Some of our members have ideas to share, others have had an exciting experience, and several of them cover a topic in a "how-to" format, making certain procedures seem so easy!

If you have an article in mind, please submit it, and be entered in the contest. If you have a topic you would like to see covered, please let me know. And, if you have read an article in a club publication that you feel our membership would enjoy, or could help other growers, please send it to me.

In the January/February 2016 AVM, we ran a photo of a lovely plant on page 6. The accurate spelling of that plant's name is, **'Masnail's Purrty Pooka.'** The spelling I had was incorrect. Grower and hybridizer, **Sharon Vantuyl** brought this to my attention. Thanks, Sharon!

Ruth



Board Nominee: Bill Price

Born and raised on the Canadian prairies, Bill lived briefly in Toronto before settling in Vancouver 30+ years ago. He has grown African violets since childhood and now grows all sorts of gesneriads as well. He grows mostly under lights, but uses any free window shelf in his home and office, and also has a greenhouse. As a profession to support the 'gesno-addiction', Bill is a Psychiatrist specializing in Autistic disorders.

Discussing these plants with other plant friends is one of Bill's greatest pleasures.

Two Plants from Erika Geimonen

Ramblin' Amethyst

Hybridized by: *E. Champion*

Standard Trailer

Rhapsodie Joan

Hybridized by: *Holtkamp*

Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Heartland's Lime Sherbet

Exhibited and Hybridized by: *Dale Martens*

Ann

Exhibited by: *Steve Turner*
Hybridized by: *B. Bryant*
Large

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Beca's Queen Mother

Exhibited by:
Glenda Williams
Hybridized by:
C. Beca

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy
Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

Recently I've had a number of related questions regarding whether it makes a difference to the results in the offspring on which parent was used as the seed parent and which was used as the pollen parent. Over the years I've seen several hybridizers recommend using the maternal, or seed parent, to get the type of foliage you wanted. Others suggested that the flower color or some other flower trait was inherited through the pollen parent. There certainly are seed parent, or maternally inherited traits. Tommie Lou and crown variegation are well known to be inherited through the seed parent. Evidence for other maternally inherited traits are not as clear.

Gregor Mendel, who worked out the first modern understanding of genetics, approached this question of parent influence in his classic experiments with pea plants. In one cross, a tall plant was used as the seed parent and a dwarf plant was the pollen parent. In a reciprocal cross, the short plant was the seed parent and a tall plant was the pollen parent. Mendel's results found no difference in the offspring. In other words, it didn't matter which parent the trait came from,

Most of the traits listed for African violet work the same as height in Mendel's peas. It doesn't matter which parent has the trait. For example, the fantasy flower pattern is a genetic dominant trait. Fantasy flowers can be inherited from either the seed parent or the pollen parent. Dominant traits are usually the easiest traits to track, as only one parent has to show the trait (pollen or seed parent). The dominant trait should show in approximately 50% of the offspring. Recessive traits, such as pink flowers, show only in the absence of a dominant color such as blue. Recessive traits can be hidden and pop out as unexpected surprises. Think blue flowers x blue flowers giving a few pink flowered offspring. However, since recessive traits have to be inherited from both parents in order to be expressed, they cannot run in one parent line and not the other. Recessives are always inherited from both parents, unlike the dominant traits which can come from only one parent.

This isn't to say that there aren't more traits than variegated foliage that follow the seed parent line. I'd just suggest that the data supporting these claims needs to be carefully examined.

Q: I've seen results of crosses using 'Frozen in Time' as one of the parents. In each case, a number of the offspring show fantasy patterns, yet the other parent was always a solid colored flower. Is the fantasy pattern coming from 'Frozen in Time'?

A: Looking at 'Frozen in Time,' I've noticed that the green edges on the petals often had flecks of white. I've always interpreted the white areas as variegation, rather than fantasy markings. 'Frozen in Time' has strong variegation in the foliage and I thought it likely that the white areas in the green edges of the flower petals was just leaf variegation showing up in the petals. Fantasy flower pattern is one of the traits that shows a clear genetic dominant inheritance. If fantasy-flowered offspring have been produced from several crosses where 'Frozen in Time' was one of the parents and the other parent had solid flowers, I'd have to conclude that the fantasy pattern was coming from 'Frozen in Time.' That's not at all what I would have predicted in looking at the flowers of 'Frozen in Time,' but that would explain the inheritance of fantasy in these offspring. It looks like we might need to expand what we mean by "fantasy" a little.

Q: Can cultivars and species mutate to the point that they are no longer the same as the original?

A: This question came from a discussion of the older Champion cultivar 'Superman' and if the

plants today were the same as the original. Leaf cuttings produce new plants from a single cell in the epidermis layer of the petiole. This cell can easily be mutated and different from the original plant. The resulting new plant is a sport, or different from the original cultivar. This type of mutation happens on a regular basis with African violets. Nearly anyone who has grown plants from leaves has produced a mutation or sport sometime during their careers. If the original cultivar plant is somehow lost, the sports will not be the same as the original plant. After a number of generations, yes, the cultivar is no longer true to the original. I'm sure this has already happened to some of our older cultivars and heirloom plants.

I've been concerned about a similar loss of genetic fidelity in the species plants. To that end, I try to restart a species from a stem tip cutting or sucker, whenever possible. Plants taken this way are much more likely to be genetically identical to the original because they are not starting from a single cell. The growing meristem that produced them has many cells and is much more likely to remain true to type. Even then, it is possible for mutations to creep in, and any long term propagation of African violets by vegetative means could result in offspring that are no longer true to type. The only long term way I know to prevent this problem would be to freeze cells in liquid nitrogen for long-term preservation. Regenerating plants from this stored tissue would cut down the number of generations over time and should preserve the original genetic material.

Q: If fantasy flowers are a genetic dominant, why did I get only a few fantasy offspring in one of my crosses?

A: There are a couple of explanations for your results. First, how many offspring did you grow out? A cross where one parent has fantasy flowers should produce approximately 50% fantasy in the offspring. However, if you only grew out ten plants, the ratio could vary widely from the expected 5:5 just because of random error. Genetic ratios such as 1:1 or 3:1 are best seen in a large number of offspring.

Second, were the babies you transplanted selected at random from the seedlings? Or, did you perhaps select the biggest or easier to transplant babies? In order to see a 1:1 ratio, the offspring should be selected at random from the available seedlings. It might be that fantasy is running linked to lighter green foliage or a certain plant size. Selecting for dark green offspring or large offspring may skew the outcome, lowering your number of fantasy plants.

Third, although fantasy flowers should inherit a genetic dominant, it is an ever-mutating trait, and will revert back to solid colors. Just ask anyone who tries to propagate fantasy plants from leaves and see how many of the offspring revert to solid colors. This would also lower your expected number of fantasy-flowered offspring. There may be other factors coming into play as well, but these would be my first suspicions of altered outcomes in a genetic cross.

Q: Is show foliage a matter of genetics, culture, or both?

A: Hybridizers have been selecting plants with well-behaved show foliage for their crosses for decades. Some hybridizers make foliage the primary selection criteria in their crosses. Any seedling that shows the slightest hint of improper foliage goes immediately to the compost pile. This ruthless selection pressure and the fact that it works, supports the idea that foliage is strongly controlled by genetics. However, if the plant is not grown under a suitable environment, the best genetics in the world cannot correct the damage. Therefore, good show foliage has to have a strong genetic predisposition then excellent care, to bring out that potential. It's a combination of both genetics and culture.

Can Chimera Violets Change Their Stripes?

By Robin Murray
email: ArdenVioletry@gmail.com

In 2011 I acquired a starter plant of Sierra Sunrise.

Sierra Sunrise, (10243) 01/27/2010 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble light maroon pansy/blue fantasy, dark maroon tips. Crown variegated light green, yellow and beige, ovate. Semiminiature)

When it first bloomed, I was a bit disappointed to see no fantasy whatsoever, although the striking crown-variegation was nice, and I began to appreciate the solid blooms for the lovely shades of coral, especially intense at the petal tips.

Sport of Sierra Sunrise, 'Carmine Tips'

The plant bloomed several times again so I set leaves of this sport dubbed 'Carmine Tips' and soon learned 'Sierra Sunrise' had several named sports. Among these are: Dark Kiss (10527) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses), Fairy Castle (10590) 03/08/2013 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses), LC's Sunrise (L. Canning), LC's Sunset (L. Canning), Lyon's Delta Dawn (10538) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses).

None of these sports matched my sport. The leaf babies grew well and I selected five to grow out to bloom. They were placed into 3 oz. Solo cups in a 50/50 media of Black Magic and Espoma AV mix with added perlite. I use a modified "Texas potting" method, by adding an acrylic wick. The young plants thrived under nine-ten hours of T-8 lighting and MaxSea (16-16-16) fertilizer. All grew to be semi-miniatures with crown variegation.

In Spring 2015 three of the new leaf babies bloomed the same as their mother, 'Carmine Tips' and then ... surprise! Two of the leaf babies bloomed as chimeras - identical twins, no less! Both bloomed a creamy white single-semidouble pansy with a coral stripe. I labeled them 'SSS (Sierra Sunrise Sport)-Stripe 1' and 'SSS-Stripe 2.'

I wondered if they would bloom true again? In the fall of 2015 I had the answer... sort of. 'SSS-Stripe 2' was first to bloom and repeated the coral stripe with white edges, but 'SSS-Stripe 1' decided to reverse the stripe/edge colors featuring a white stripe with coral edges!

Sierra Sunrise chimera sports 1 & 2

I have never seen this stripe reversal before, and I do not know whether this bloom will prove to be stable, but it certainly makes 'Sierra Sunrise' an interesting cultivar!

2015 SSSport stripe reversal

I Get Letters...I Get Phone Calls

By Pat Hancock

Some ask for growing information or help, some are humorous, some are very sad.

One letter that always comes with an order, and always gives me a laugh, is the one that asks me not to call - only send an email. It goes on to say; "Please mark the package - HOLD AT POST OFFICE."

Most explain that the reason they need to "sneak" the leaves in so that the husband or wife won't realize they have bought more violet leaves. Usually they go on to explain that they really aren't trying to be devious, but just don't want to "hear it."

The writer always seems to believe they are the *only one* who must do this in order to pursue their hobby.

I often get calls from people who have a problem with their plants. Sometimes they are in their 90's and have grown violets for many years, never encountering what they now see being wrong.

It is always gratifying when they call back later to tell you that your advice worked and their plants are recovering.

The saddest calls that I get are the calls from people who send large amounts of money "bidding" on a popular Internet site, only to lose the leaves or plants because they did not really understand what they were getting, and had no knowledge of how to take care of them. Barnum once said, "There is a fool born every minute," and it certainly seems we have our share in the AV world. They pay extraordinary prices for leaves and starter plants that can be purchased elsewhere for normal prices.

A woman who lives in New York called to tell me that she had spent $3,000 bidding, on the most popular Internet bidding site, and had nothing to show for it. She filed complaints with the site, with no results. She said she had bought African violets from Home Depot with great success, but could not save any she purchased through the bidding site.

She also admitted that the plants she received did not look anything like the pictures she saw on the online bidding site. She did not understand that the plant she would receive would really not look like the picture, but would be a tiny plant in a small cup.

Admittedly, she should have been smarter, but how much better the outcome if someone had sold her plants for a normal price, along with complete instructions on how to grow them.

Perhaps, we would have gained a new grower for the hobby, instead of a very unhappy one who possibly was giving up!

When I hear that people who love African violets are selling "starter" plants and leaves through this popular site for $50 - $150, I feel sick that 'greed' has become a part of our wonderful hobby.

We should all be trying our best to help others entering the hobby by giving them growing information, introducing them to AVSA, and NEVER taking advantage of them because they do not know better.

In recent months, an older hybrid called 'Ann', hybridized by Betty Bryant many years ago, is a "Hot Item", selling for exorbitant prices on the popular online site.

'Ann' was a popular plant back in the day, but I am not aware that it was ever a top show winner.

'Ann' has very beautiful variegation and very 'common', small raspberry blossoms. Most people who 'grow for show,' feel it is a "shy" bloomer.

It is beyond my understanding that anyone would pay $50, upwards to $150 for a leaf or small plant of 'Ann.'

This plant is available as a plant of good size, both from the Violet Barn, and from Starz n' Streps for around $10, plus postage. (both advertisers in this magazine, and supporters of AVSA.)

My goal, for the next year, is to supply the public with as many leaves of 'Ann' as I can possibly come up with. Perhaps, if more people have the plant, the price will go back to normal.

I do not know of any African violet leaves or starter plants that are worth $50 to whatever. An Internet bidding site is not the problem. Many people who sell online, sell for normal prices, and do not take advantage of anyone.

It is the "bidding," and paying much more than they are worth, that hurts our hobby. "Greed" hurts everything it touches.

Question Box

By Sue Haffner

3015 Timmy Ave. • Clovis, CA 93612

Email: sueh@csufresno.edu • haff.sue2@gmail.com

Hello, Violet Friends,

By now we are in the midst of the show season. We always learn something from each show experience: how better to grow, how better to interpret Design Division themes, etc, etc. I always look forward to talking to our visitors and finding out how they grow their plants. This year one of our visitors told me that she always sprayed an insecticide on her plant collection every month, "just in case." She didn't phrase it as a question, and, as I was ringing up her sale plants, I didn't offer a suggestion, but it made me think.

In my opinion it's probably not a good idea to do indiscriminate application of pesticides. It should probably be done only if you have a specific problem. For one thing, you can kill off the good bugs, along with the bad. Good bugs? Yes, they exist. How do you know if you have them? Well, I guess you don't, really, as they're mostly invisible. You've heard the rhyme:

Big fleas have little fleas on their backs to bite 'em;
Little fleas have lesser fleas, so on, ***ad infinitum.***

And our pals, the thrips, have nothing to do all day but devise new ways of resisting pesticides. Limiting exposure is a standard way of defeating that strategy. The pest we dread the most, mites, are not insects, at all, so won't be controlled by an insecticide anyway. Let your plants be your guide. If they seem to be doing well, the foliage looks fresh and healthy, then they're probably okay. When you repot be sure to check the roots for any sign of problems.

It's not unusual for growers to mistake cultural problems for a pest infestation. Light, temperature, specific location - these can all bring about changes in the appearance of your plants. Remember that simple repotting can make a world of difference in how your plants are performing. Rule out other things before bringing in the "heavy artillery."

Q. *I have heard on several occasions that one or more plants in a show or exhibit had "culture changes." What is a "culture change?" Can the condition be corrected? Are points deducted for evidence of a culture change?*

A. A culture change, or culture break, is an abrupt or radical change in a plant's growth pattern, especially the foliage pattern. The desired pattern of a mature African violet is a gradual increase in the size of the foliage from the tiny center leaves to the largest outer leaves with the rows overlapping and a minimum of gaps between the individual leaves. One of the most common examples of a culture change is the secondary leaves, or baby leaves, being seen as the bottom row. However, one small off-size leaf, or even a row of small, off-size leaves scan occur anywhere between the center and the outer-most row of leaves. Points can be deducted under condition according to the number of off-size leaves evident and the degree to which they spoil the ideal pattern.

Secondary leaves on the lowest row are usually the result of the plant "shifting gears" to become larger as it is repotted into a larger pot. If the repotting is delayed too long, the leaves that form are somewhat stunted. Once repotted, the plant puts forth an extreme burst of growth.

Occasionally one or two secondary leaves on an inner row can be removed without spoiling the overall growth pattern. Most often, however, it is necessary to break the plant back far enough to eliminate the offending leaves and repot in the appropriate size pot.

Q. *I received several new mini violets a few weeks ago and repotted them this week with wicking soil. I pre-soaked the wicks and used*

damp wicking soil. After repotting, I let them sit in an inch of water for several minutes before elevating them above the water. Two days later and the soil still feels wet to me. This is the first time I've had violets in many years and I'm worried about drowning them!

A. It sounds like this grower has done everything right as far as repotting is concerned. Sometimes when the plant has just been repotted, though, its roots are small in relation to the amount of soil and don't use the water as fast as it is being drawn up. Still, I'm not sure what the grower means by "wicking soil." I'm presuming she means a very light, airy mix. If she's really concerned about this, I would recommend maybe pulling the wicks out of the reservoirs and sitting the pots on capillary matting. Keep a watch on how wet the pots seem; water from the top for awhile until the plants start to grow a little.

Q. *I put down some violet leaves a few months ago and still don't have any plantlets. What did I do wrong?*

A. It's always hard to tell just what's happening when growers report this. Perhaps you're doing nothing wrong. But here are a couple of tips.

If the light on the leaves is 'hot', it will rob the leaf of moisture and encourage it to grow roots over plantlets. Leaves need far less light than mature plants, although too little light will mean it takes longer to propagate. The next point is temperature. If the air in the growing area is cooler, it will take longer for the plantlets to develop. The leaf needs to have originated from the middle of the plant - not too young or too old, in other words. A light, moist potting mix is best and a fresh cut on the leaf stem helps. Make the cut at an angle and plant shallowly with the angle facing up. This way the plantlets will be more likely to grow upwards toward the light. Also, some growers report that they seem to get plantlets sooner when the leaf is planted in a small amount of mix, rather than a deep pot-full.

Q. *Why are African violet leaves hairy?*

A. What an interesting question! I'm not sure there is any authoritative answer. Generally, leaf hairs supply some protection to the plant by providing shade and insulation. They can retard the loss of moisture by interrupting the flow of air over the leaf surface; they can protect a tender leaf from harsh sunlight; they can even regulate the temperature of the leaf surface. If the habitat is subject to fog, the hairs can collect dew and direct it down toward the plant's roots. For some plants, hairy leaves can deter small herbivores, as the hairs make the leaves unpalatable. If you have several of the ***Saintpaulia*** species you will note that some have hairier leaves than others, as well as thicker, heavier leaves. These attributes are probably the products of the various habitats in which the species are found.

So, wouldn't violets that have been grown in "captivity", so to speak, eventually lose those some of these attributes that may be habitat-related? Well, not if these attributes are hard-wired into the plants' genetic inheritance. (This sounds like a question for Dr Jeff Smith!) Still, African violets have been in cultivation for a bit over a century, not long enough, perhaps, for evolution to be evident. Ask in another hundred years!

Q. *What's going on with my violets? I keep having the outside leaves turn brown and mushy and droop over the edge of the pot.*

A. While it is normal for the outer ring of leaves to gradually age and turn yellow, what you are seeing is probably petiole rot. This is a chemical injury also called "efflorescence disease." It is thought to result from the contact of the leaf petioles with fertilizer salts that collect on the surface of the soil and on the rim of the pot. Get rid of the incrustation as quickly as possible. Remove any affected leaves, cutting as far down on the stem as you can. Flush the soil; even better, repot in a clean pot with fresh potting mix.

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Cajun's Little Joy

Exhibited by: *Brenda Conner*

Hybridized by: *B. Thibodeaux*

Semiminiature

Cirelda

Exhibited by: *Bob Clark*

Semiminiature Trailer

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Optimara 'Little Azurite'

Exhibited by:

Michelle Wickersheim

Hybridized by:

Holtkamp

Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

Dec. 3, 2015 – Feb. 25, 2016

Janet Riemer • 256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534

Total this period: $2,165.00

Fantasy – ($500-$999)

Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society

Geneva – ($100-$499)

African Violet Society of Dayton (OH)
Eric Summers
Julie Goss
Chuck Bingham
Linna & Ronald Bernhard
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Kathy Woods & Joe Scime
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Jennifer & Jason Jackson
(In memory of Elaine Re)

Multicolor - $50-$99

Columbus African Violet Society (OH)
Joan Santino
Robert & Lynne Meade
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Hi Country Judges Workshop (CO)
Rebecca Ricker
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Gladys M. Williams
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Makrouhi Madenlian
(In memory of Elaine Re)

Two-Tone – ($25-$49)

Elizabeth D. Lebert
First African Violet Society of Wichita Falls (TX)
(In memory of Herb Sleeper)
Sue & Charles Ramser
(In memory of Herb Sleeper)
Susan Riley
Lone Star African Violet Council
(In memory of Joyce Stenger)
Lone Star African Violet Council
(In memory of Ida Bushkul)
South Coast African Violet Society (CA)
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Robert Kurzynski
Tustana African Violet Society (CA)
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Dr. Richard A. Nicholas
Marjorie (Marky) Paugh
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Tom & Marge Savage
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Mel S. Grice
Corky Reichmann
Janice Gates
(In memory of Elaine Re)

Thumbprint – Under $25

Annette N. Hershkowitz
Jean Corkill
Martha Nix
Rebecca McMeel
Ralph A. Mancusi
Diane Tuska
Pamela Schwager
Deborah L. Hoover
F. Eleanor Mattaliano
Judy Walton
Barbara Kaping
(In memory of Elaine Re)
Tri-Counties African Violet Society (CA)
(In memory of Elaine Re)

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS

Thumbprint (Under $25)

Geneva ($100-$499)

Two-Tone ($25-$49)

Fantasy ($500-$999)

Multicolor ($50-$99)

Chimera (Over-$1000)

Contest Entry

Downsizing...The Agony Of It All

By Sandi Mynatt

Recently, I looked at my growing number of violets and measured my combination sunroom/bird room yet again. I was imagining where I'll put the seventy-five or so plants that are now happily rooting from leaves. Overly optimistic, I promised them they'd have good homes on the shelf with lots of light, space, fertilizer, and love... then I shook my head and walked away. (A maneuver I have perfected over the years.) In spite of this, I had the crazy idea that maybe I should downsize a tiny bit...shudder the thought. I decided to lie down until the disturbing thought passed. I have found that if you put off doing something long enough, a solution appears.

I was going though the morning routine today, feeding my five parrots. As usual, I let one of them out to perch on her cage as I was working on their breakfast dishes. Lost in thought about what miniscule part of my 'to do' list I might accomplish, I didn't realize that it had become strangely quiet. *Too quiet.*

About that time I heard a crash/splat sound coming from the bird/violet room. I arrived just in time to see one of the cockatoos with a violet leaf in her mouth. She dropped it immediately upon seeing me, and hid behind her cage. No fool, that one.

Upon closer inspection, I saw to my horror that she had buzzed the leaves off the entire front row of violets on two shelves! She also completely decimated the one with blooms that I had planned to pot and give to someone the next day. I suspect the tasty-looking blooms were the first to go. After much hand waving, shouting, and boot stomping (a new dance craze, I'm sure) I picked through the remnants of the wounded, dead, and dying. Fortunately this whole rack is made up entirely of noids...not that I love them any less, of course. However, had it been my new, blooming, named varieties from the show, this story might have ended with an execution.

Some of them were marginal and I decided to go ahead and toss them in the name of progress. (I think I heard Taps played somewhere in the distance.) I vacuumed up the dirt and brushed the leaves of those upon who the dirty mix was dropped. (The lucky ones that were not eaten alive). I had thoughts about counseling and therapy, but chose to ignore it. Well, I can say the downsizing was effective, if not very specific.

But I have a question: Does anyone out there want to buy a slightly used Cockatoo? Cheap?

Time to Submit Your Nominations for Best Varieties

No nominations for the best varieties have been submitted this year. We have made it easier to submit your nominations for Best Varieties. You can now go to the AVSA website members section and enter your nominations from the website. Once you have decided on your entries simply complete the online form and click the submit button. There is also a form that can be printed out and mailed if you would rather do that. If you are one of our members reading this that does not use computers, you may write your entries on a piece of paper and mail them to me and they will be included in the compilation process.

Every member may submit a list of 25 varieties once a year. Entries received by September 1st will be included in the report appearing in the November/December issue of the *African Violet Magazine*. Entries received after September 1st will be included in the following year report so you can submit a nomination at any time and it will be included.

If you are mailing in your nominations using the form from the website, the address is included on the form. If you are mailing in a written nomination the address appears in the inside cover of the AVM every issue. It is repeated here for your convenience.

Mail your nominations for Best Varieties to John Carter, 1825 W Lincoln St, Broken Arrow, OK, 74012-8509.

Choosing Show Themes: A Plea

By Paul Kroll

Those of us who have been involved with AVSA sanctioned shows are well aware that the horticulture division of the schedule rarely changes from year to year. The design division and the court of honor is where the rubber meets the road and the show theme is manifested. I find it ironic that the majority of show themes are chosen by those who never enter the design division classes. With all due respect, I ask why?

As a designer, I read over the schedule and make my choices for entering. If there are some classes that strike me as interesting, I will enter; if not, I do not enter. It seems that the more I work at a design the worse it gets!

While it is possible to scratch out class titles around most any topic, it is far more interesting and productive in the long run to have a theme that can be worked with easily and produces many appealing classes. The designers I know and respect absolutely hate class titles that are indigenous to the geographical area of that club, show, convention, etc. Titles that are broad in scope and simple – perhaps one word title and description – are far more appealing. Long, exhaustive descriptions written about each class title are also prohibitive in that the designer is limited in their creativity to interpret and perhaps expand on the title.

Choosing themes such as childrens' stories or books, other book titles, musical themes of any sort, cooking themes, Circus, TV shows, and such make wonderful class choices as opposed to those that are specific to any given area. One of the most interesting and challenging show themes ever at our New York State conventions was "Intoxicating Violets" where the design classes were each titled as drinks. Designers do not want to do exhaustive research, and do not want to be backed into the proverbial corner with a long, detailed description of what is required. The most challenging and fun titles are those that leave the interpretation entirely up to the designer.

Our AVSA HANDBOOK has no rule or regulation that prohibits any design from being static, mobile, kinetic, or anything else. Also, a design may be anchored anywhere: suspended, anchored to the back or side of the niche, etc. So long as the schedule permits and does not prohibit such interpretations, why not? Care must be given to properly written schedules for that reason.

Allow your club's designers to have a say in show theme choices. Your show will benefit by doing so.

Luncheon Auction It's not too late!

By Edna Rourke

The 70th AVSA Convention - **"Violets Color the Land of Enchantment" in Albuquerque, NM** and our 18th Auction is just almost here. We still are in need of your help to make this auction the best yet. It's not too late to make a donation. Our past success has always been due the very generous donations of our members both amateur and commercial.

To both our members and affiliates as well as our hybridizers and commercial members, won't you kindly consider making a donation of a violet-related item or violet related craft item? Your donations would be most welcome and very much appreciated.

Your help and donations insure the success of the auction.

Please either give me a call at 203-926-9716 or email me at **Apapillon@aol.com** to let me know what items you will be donating. I look forward to hearing from you.

See you in Albuquerque!

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Chien-Liang Hsieh – Kaohsiung City, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

'Freya's Blue Ribbons' (10802) 01/05/2016 (C. Hsieh) Semidouble chimera purple-fantasied blue large frilled pansy/white-pale lavender stripe, green edge. Medium green, plain. **Standard**

'Freya's Galaxy' (10803) 01/05/2016 (C. Hsieh) Single-semidouble chimera white large frilled star/blue-fantasied pink-lavender stripe, thin green edge. Medium green, quilted, glossy. **Standard**

'Freya's Ice Crystals' (10804) 01/05/2016 (C. Hsieh) Single chimera white-lavender sticktite large frilled star/purple stripe. **Variegated** medium green and cream, wavy. **Large**

'Freya's Rainbow Brushwork' (10805) 01/05/2016 (C. Hsieh) Semidouble-double chimera white large frilled star/variable green tint; blue-fantasied pink to variable dark lavender stripe. Medium green, quilted. **Standard**

*****

Don Landek – Strongsville, OH

'O'Fortuna' (10806) 01/07/2016 (D. Landek) Single white sticktite pansy/light lavender stripe. Dark green, ovate, quilted, hairy, scalloped. **Standard**

*****

Belinda Thibodeaux – Patterson, LA

'Cajun's Big Bertha' (10807) 01/30/2016 (B. Thibodeaux) Single-semidouble pink ruffled pansy/raspberry sparkle edge. **Variegated** medium green, cream and pink, heart-shaped/red back. **Large**

'Cajun's Blue Bayou' (10808) 01/30/2016 (B. Thibodeaux) Semi-double-double violet-blue star/thin white edge. **Variegated** medium green and cream, plain, heart-shaped. **Standard**

'Cajun's Lil Forever Blue' (10809) 01/30/2016 (B. Thibodeaux) Single-semidouble dark blue star. **Variegated** medium green, cream and pink, plain, heart-shaped. **Miniature**

'Cajun's Wild Eyes' (10810) 01/30/2016 (B. Thibodeaux) Single-semidouble white star/purple eye, rays. **Variegated** medium green and white, plain, quilted. **Standard**

'Cajun's Zydeco' (10811) 01/30/2016 (B. Thibodeaux) Single-semidouble white frilled pansy/bright pink patches. **Variegated** dark green, cream and pink, plain, ovate/red back. **Large**

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REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following have been changed at the request of the hybridizers:

'Buckeye Especially Mine' (9065) – Add "variable" before "raspberry and purple fantasy."

'Buckeye Too Tempting' (10489) – Change blossom description from "darker veining, edge" to "purple fantasy, edge."

'Gladys Harland' (5405) – Add "/white edge" to end of blossom description.

'K's Merrylegs' (10795) – Change from Miniature to Semiminiature.

Another Way to Share

By Jeannie Myers

In late 2013 I felt inspired and motivated to try writing my first AVM article, so I dug into my stores of memory and AV growing experience to come up with a suitable topic. Very shortly thereafter my article, "A Beginner's Journey with Rob's Love Bite," was published in the AVM. Currently, I've seen the invitations for folks to submit articles, and I briefly revisited the thought of writing a second one. No topic came to mind.

To provide a little personal background, I've been growing African violets since 2008 and currently maintain a collection of around sixty varieties (seventy plants, some duplicates), all grown in green Oyama pots. I went to my first national AVSA convention in Nashville but did not show any plants there. I've exhibited in two Sacramento shows and earned numerous rosettes, blue ribbons, and one Runner-up to Best in Show.

For a couple of years I've been an active member of Facebook's "African Violet Buddies" and was formerly one of the administrators. I reached the point where I needed a break from the admin role, with lots going on in my life and too many commitments, but I still post photos and comments periodically.

Last night I posted on African Violet Buddies about a project I initiated a year ago, and numerous Buddies have risen up and exclaimed "What a great idea!" And, Joyce Stork urged me to write an AVM article about it. So here's my topic, and here goes!

In December of 2014 I found myself realizing my African violet collection had grown too large; to the point of becoming less manageable and less enjoyable. I had sold, and gifted, a few plants to Facebook friends, but felt frustrated with the amount of shipping damage that was happening, no matter how carefully I followed packing instructions. I gave away some plants to local friends and acquaintances. Still my numbers remained too high for me to provide good care to my foliaged friends. I found myself beginning to resent their demands and needs, especially with the colder temperatures and an onslaught of powdery mildew. (I later solved that problem with Immunox.)

So I wondered what else I could do. Some of my AV Buddies were saying "give your excess plants to nursing homes, etc." Aha, that sounded like a brilliant idea!

I knew exactly where and whom to call because my mom had lived happily in an assisted living apartment at Atria Senior Living before she passed away in 2011. I still maintained contact there. I presented my idea of gifting a dozen blooming African violets to them to distribute as they wished. The response was not what I expected. Instead of a big, warm verbal hug of, "Yes, thank you very much, we'll take them," the Activities Director posed a question to me. "Jeannie, would you be willing to bring in the African violets personally,

Residents from left to right: Grace Collins, Virgie Gilkey and Marianne Alves, watch Jeannie Myers' demonstration.
(Photo by Shell Belle Morley, Atria Activities Director)

and teach the residents how to grow them and care for them?"

Thus we began the Atria African Violet Club, which has been meeting once a month for a year now. Every third Wednesday, I pack up my supplies and head over to Atria for our 1:30pm meeting. Sometimes I bring excess plants, but always I bring premixed fertilizer water, perlite, soil mix, empty Oyama pots, paper towels, a large cookie

sheet that I use as a potting tray, and an assortment of spoons, scoops, scissors, baggies, scotch tape, and small plant stakes. Residents bring in the African violets they're growing, and one by one I work with each plant, doing a little pruning, staking, repotting, fertilizing – in short, whatever the plant needs.

I've also assembled a number of handouts describing basic care, history, growing in Oyama pots, and more. These are shared readily with residents who come to the meetings. For a while we were growing babies from leaves in baggies of dirt hanging near residents' windows – watching that process was a true miracle to some of the new growers.

Recently, I've been repotting and trying to salvage over a dozen neglected violets that were donated by a man to Atria when his wife passed away. The plants were dusty, had hugely long necks, over or under-watered, and neglected. Many of these have been revived and then gifted to new residents as they move in. What a pleasure to see the joy on an elderly resident's face when that first new bloom appears!

When I first contemplated the thought of giving my excess African violets to an elder facility, I had absolutely no idea how this would play out. My original desire to dispose of excess violets has been replaced with a special kind of pleasure. Truly, this sharing, guiding, and nurturing, has become one of the most satisfying things I've ever done.

Excess African Violets

If you have a small amount of time, some extra African violets, and a nearby facility, please consider loving the elderly in this way!

AVSA 2016 Convention and Show

'Violets Color the Land of Enchantment'

Albuquerque, NM

Sunday, May 29 – Sunday, June 5, 2016

ORGANIZING YOUR VIOLETS

By Barbara Conrad

When someone has three or four African violets, organization does not come into play. However, so many of us are true violet lovers and always have room for one more mature plant, a plantlet, or leaves to root! This is our joy, and for some of us it is our passion!

How easily a collection of violets can become shelves of confusion. This results into uncertainty regarding plant names as well as when to repot. Too often lovely violets grow up to be "NOIDS" or "No Ideas" or "No Names" or "Maybes." When a new method of watering, fertilizing, or lighting is instilled in a few plants, record-keeping of some sort becomes a necessity.

Clues to successes and failures may be analyzed to give you a head start into future plans with hopefully positive outcomes. Records could keep you from making unsuccessful cultural attempts over and over again - some of us are notorious for these futile efforts! You cold develop a clearer understanding of methods that actually have been productive. Record keeping really comes down to figuring out what you need to know about your plants, rather than detailed 'busy work' that you'll never refer to or need. The result is an inventory of information for your own personal collection. It not only will not be seen by anyone else, as the records would not be relevant to others. Obviously, if you are hybridizing violets, meticulous notes are absolutely necessary as they can, and most likely, will be shared.

You will need a notebook and/or a computer. You might have a lap-top computer or 'tablet' that can be carried around with you. Otherwise, it is difficult and time-consuming to run and turn on a computer every time you want to add information, although it might be neater than using a notebook! However, a notebook can always be kept in your violet-growing area, and be available instantly every time you want to retrieve notes or jot new information. Smudges, rips, spills, crossed out information, etc. don't matter at all.

Let's say a new plant has come into your possession. You will want to enter the violet name, date received, possibly the hybridizer, and registration date, plant size, and perhaps, the condition of the plant. You might like to note where you obtained the plant, such as from another club member, store, or sales table at a show. Is it important for you to note other details, such as bloom color(s) and type, leaf color(s) and type and pot size? If you are planting leaves, you may choose to record the names of the mother leaves, date planted, and date the babies began popping up. On the other hand if you have a plant that is doing poorly or dies or is given away or sold, you might make subsequent notes. All of this information can get out of hand, because it is not taped to the actual plant container! You will need to devise a system to keep your notations on each plant easy to understand and be able to retrieve that background quickly. If it is difficult to locate, you are defeating the purpose.

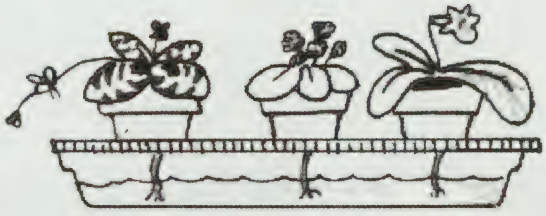
Here are suggestions of methods for you to consider as guidelines. You might want to place a number on a label on the side of a pot to direct you to the source number in your records. For example: A plant with a number "20" on the pot can match the number "20" in your notations. If your notes involve only a few headings, you might try using colored plastic cocktail picks in the pots and match them to color names in your records. Nail polish is available in so many colors that you might want to work out a color system with dots of polish. If you can locate slats to old Venetian blinds, they may be cut with scissors and used as color picks in each pot by using felt tip marking pens. You may get color swatches from a paint store or cut up holiday greeting cards. You may make purchases of pre-printed numbers and letters on sticky-back papers - clear or opaque - at an office supply store. You may write on sticky-back laser labels. These are great for sticking quickly onto the pot and in a notebook.

These varied, yet very simple measures, are especially helpful when you have lots of

newly-potted plantlets. Your method for identifying one group of leaves can suddenly identify many individually potted babies. For example: Every leaf or plantlet with the same name can simply become a number "30". If you have babies, the numbers might read "30A", "30B", etc. They will have been potted on the same day and have the history of the mother leaves. You may want to mark it with a star if the parent violet won a prize at a show to identify it's award-winning potential!

Another method of record keeping might come directly under headings such as "foliar feeding used on numbers 16 through 20" or "wick watering with narrow acrylic fabric strips on plantlets numbers 1-10" or trying "fish emulsion with seaweed added to numbers 30 to 40". Your categories for information come from what is relevant to you to help you save time and frustration when you have many violets of various types, and stages of growth. Maybe you'll go over your notes and look up plant number "12" to see if it is leaning towards the show potential of the mother plant. There's no more doubt as to which plant 'might' have that strong background.

Have fun with your record keeping, making it as simple or complex as you choose! You'll find yourself no longer having groups of "NOIDS," What a relief! Is there anything worse than having a show-worthy plant as a "No Name?" Never again will you have a tray of leaves where the name has rotted or fallen off! Such a relief to have some organization!



Growing Episcia Plants

By Joy King

Origins: Episcias come from Central and South America.

There are ten species left, currently six species in cultivation.

Episcias are a very easy plant to grow, and they are grown mainly for their beautiful colored leaves.

Foliage: light green, emerald, silver brown, bronze, pink, burgundy, white, and shades of all and multiple combinations.

Flowers: The flowers are a bonus and come in colors of red to orange, pink, blue, yellow and white flowers.

Fertilize exactly the same way as you do your violets; with 1/8 teaspoon fertilizer to 2 litres of water.

If you are growing in a large bowl, they look most attractive if grown with an odd number in the bowl, either with three or five stolons.

Propagation: Cut the stolons about 1 inch (2.5cm) long and insert stolon into the soil so the leaves just sit on top of the soil. The stolons will take about seven to ten days to take root, and you should have a nicely covered bowl of beautiful colored leaves in about two to three months.

Cultural Requirements: Plenty of light, Humidity 60% + if possible, Daily misting ideal.

Temperature; 60F – 110F, 80F = 26.66C is ideal

Misting: NEVER USE COLD WATER

It removes Chlorines and Chloramines from tap water. This can be done by using products that prepare water for fish tanks, and can be found at your local aquarium/pet shop.

Use hot water in your spray bottle and when the fine mist reaches the *Episcia*, the temperature will just be warm.

Leach pots every two months with rain or distilled water, to remove salts.

From the *Newsletter* of the African Violet Society of South Australia, Inc.

Contest Entry

"You're Joking, Right?"

By Kurt Jablonski

That's the question I asked myself at this year's ***Dixie African Violet Society Convention*** when I walked into the showroom and saw the rosettes for ***Best in Show*** and ***Second Best in Show*** in front of my two exhibits of 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler.' I really could not believe it! I went over to discuss it with Thad Scaggs and Sue Hoffman. It was true! I really had done it. I couldn't wait to call the hybridizer, my friend, Pat Hancock. I knew she'd be excited when she found out.

"I don't think that's ever happened before," she said.

As far as I know she was right. It was truly an experience I will never forget. It's funny too, because several months before the show I told myself that I was going to win ***Best in Show*** with 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler.' It felt amazing to accomplish my goal.

Rewind the clock to about a year before the show. I had made my plans to attend Dixie so in preparation, plants were selected, potted up, and given my utmost attention and the best growing space. These two plants were among the fifteen that I took to the show. The most interesting part was even though they were both plants of 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler,' they were grown differently.

The two plants were treated equally except for their soil mixes. As someone that is never satisfied with what I am doing, I am constantly trying to find better ways to grow my violets. This led me to trying different soilless mixes. I wanted to see which plant grew the best. The first plant was potted into Organic Mechanics Premium Potting Soil while the second plant was potted into Pro-Mix BX.

Each plant grew beautifully, but the first one grew noticeably larger than the second. I had high hopes that the plant in the organic mix would steal the show. It was truly a magnificent sight with dark, shiny, huge leaves. Actually, when my mother and I were in the hotel lobby waiting for our room to be ready, Marie Burns, infamous violet

grower extraordinaire, walked over to peak into my boxes. When she saw my 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler' she told me it was going to win Best in Show.

Even though these plants were the same variety, their culture played a vital role in each plant's development. The difference in the plants was obvious from the time they were small. The plant grown in Organic Mechanics had more texture and size to each leaf. The plant in Pro-Mix looked more like most 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparklers' I had seen in shows before. Even with the different mixes both produced beautiful plants.

My goal for this article was to share my personal experience and to show people that plants can be grown in a number of different ways, but most importantly is how you treat them in their everyday culture. That truly makes a great show plant.

I can't imagine that this will happen again anytime soon, but wasn't it a real double win both for the plant, as well as for Pat Hancock and I?

Here's to it happening again!!!

Phoenix

Exhibited by:
Mary Corondan
Hybridized by:
S. Saliba
Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Contest Entry

My First AVSA Convention: On the road to Kansas City

By Bruce Pearson

Having seen the beautiful plants my friend Donna McGraw from Houston got at the AVSA Nashville Convention the year before, I was determined to make it to Kansas City for the next one. But booking a ticket to Kansas City was just too simple. Previously, Donna called and said she was going to drive from Houston, as she is worse than I am, and needs a full station wagon to haul all her plant purchases. She invites me to come along with her, and I book the flight to Houston. She picks me up at the airport and I see her "rain-forest" for the first time in person. Their house is built around a 30' by 70' foot, and 30' foot tall greenhouse solarium! Ferns are her main interest, but she must have 500 varieties of African violets and Gesneriads, along with a myriad of other tropical species from around the world. We have traveled many times together to Thailand as well as down to our farm in Mexico, always collecting plants.

Arriving fairly late, I barely scratched the surface in seeing all of her plants. We have little time in the morning as we want to get an early start before predicted bad weather for Kansas City. We stop at a couple of nurseries in the Houston area that she wants to show me before heading north. We also make several nursery stops in Dallas, but are rushed by the inclement weather.

We need to get to Oklahoma City for the night, staying with my grade school buddy. The next morning we again head north stopping in my hometown of Ponca City, Oklahoma, before heading to Newkirk about fifteen miles north to attend a joint 1950 to 1959 grade school reunion. There were only eighty-four kids in the entire school, and it is doubtful if that figure has changed much since that time. It is still a three-room school. Five of the seven former students in my class were there. I had not seen three of them since leaving Oklahoma more than forty years earlier. We did get there a bit early and had time to drive out to Peckham Elementary, my old school. Having not been there for forty years, we drive right by. The school is just a spot in the road, but I must say I got a great education there. Moving to the big town of Ponca City during my 7th grade did not put me to a disadvantage, in fact, I fluffed off two years until the "city kids" caught up to what I had already been taught. Anyway it was great reunion, perfectly timed.

Our next stop was Wichita, where we spent the night with another friend I met on eBay. Diem Phan was purchasing all kinds of plants from me on eBay. She took me up on my invitation to visit us at our home in West Palm, and we had a great week visiting various nurseries. She bought so much stuff, her brother came down to drive it back in a rental van. Adding his plants too, the car was hard pressed for space to put even another a toothpick inside. She is planning to go to Thailand with us in the future, and is going to show us her native country of Viet Nam, possibly on the same voyage.

We have such a great time visiting nurseries and garden centers in Wichita that we spend two nights. But even better than the plant nurseries are the Viet Nam dishes she treated us to. I had experienced her cooking while she was here in South Florida. She owned several restaurants in Wichita. We have one last meal, traditional Vietnamese with her entire family before heading for our final destination, Kansas City.

We arrive in Kansas City late, but are up early ready to...you guessed it! Visit more nurseries. Reading on the internet about Bird's Tropicals and their Pembroke Welsh Corgi greeter dogs, I have to get there before the crowd, not to see his orchids, which I suspect are far inferior to the

ones we produce under almost natural conditions in South Florida, compared to his ***grown under lights in a cave in Kansas***, but to see his Corgis before the violet crowd gets there. Why? Corgi owners have this unique bond, and I have nine Corgis. We immediately hit it off and were "Ole friends" before the tour bus arrives.

After the typical Corgi greeting, my expected vision of sickly light-starved common orchids is quelled. What a collection of plants they have! Several genera I had never even heard of! If ever you are in Kansas City, you must visit this unique orchid collection, tucked away in a cave, and pet the Corgis for me.

That night we attend the banquet and the opening of the show to registrants. Many, many beautiful plants, and an excellent photography opportunity. The next morning was spent standing in line, waiting for the sales booths to open. ***An experience worth the entire trip.*** I tried to exercise some restraint and came home with only sixty-six new plants.

We attended most of the informative lectures. And more importantly, I got to meet and talk with Pat Hancock, Paul Sorano, Joyce and Kent Stork, Joe Bruns, Amy Carruth, Debbie McInnis, Gary Mikita, Mary Lou Harden, David Harris, and many others that I had only associated their names with the ***African Violet Magazine***. I congratulated Belinda Thibodeaux on her New Introduction and Best of Show winner. I am rapidly learning there are so many nice, friendly, helpful people associated with African violets and Gesneriads, and can't wait to attend the next convention in Albuquerque.

On the way back, we're going to visit Carlsbad Canyon. Has anyone got any suggestions for nurseries, etc., along the way?

Our AVSA Article Contest

All those entering the Article Contest must be current members of AVSA.

The Winners of the contest will be announced at the 2017 AVSA Convention in Orlando, Florida. It is not necessary to be present to win.

The **3rd Place Winner** will receive a total of **eight** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **2nd Place Winner** will receive a total of **sixteen** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **1st Place Winner** will receive a total of **thirty-two** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **Contest Rules** are as follows:

1. ALL entered articles must be Original Work, and cannot have been published before.
2. You may write as many articles as you wish, and each entry must be marked, **CONTEST.**
3. **Submissions must be received AFTER March 1, 2016.**
   Cutoff date for entries is April 1, 2017. Articles received after this date will NOT be considered.
   1. Hybridizers, Commercial Members, and Judges, taking part, are not eligible to receive prizes.
   2. The decisions of the Judges will be FINAL.
   3. Due to the high cost of shipping leaves internationally, leaves will only be shipped to winners in the US. International members will be required to pick them up at the 2017 Orlando Convention.

For more details, read the full article in the January 2016 AVM, pg 14, or on the AVSA Website.

ON VISITING ALBUQUERQUE

By Ann L. Jones • Photos by taraskye

Welcome to the wonderful world of African Violets at the 2016 AVSA Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where the bright blue skies and occasional wispy clouds accent the high desert landscape and majestic Sandia Mountains. Albuquerque is known to have the best year-round weather in the United States.

The average daytime temperature of 81 degrees Fahrenheit at the end of May feels comfortable. At night, however, a light jacket of sweater may be necessary when there is a possibility of a decrease in temperature of twenty-five degrees or more. The vast difference between day and night temperatures is due to the rapid cooling by radiation from the earth due to the clear skies and low humidity. Relative low humidity moderates the effects of the extreme temperatures in both summer and winter. The probability of precipitation during the convention is only two percent.

Albuquerque Foothill

Elevation in Albuquerque ranges from about 4,500 feet at the Rio Grande River to 6,700 feet above sea level in the foot hills. The air is thinner at this altitude, which may result in feeling tired faster than usual after physical activity.

Adjusting to the effect of the altitude change takes a day or two. The temperature in the valley is normally a few degrees higher than in the heights. (High altitude also contributes to the faster effect that an alcoholic beverage may have on the body.)

The high altitude and low humidity causes a rapid evaporation of moisture from the skin and lungs. Drinking plenty of water throughout the day will offset this effect. Applying a moisturizing skin cream or lotion will help prevent the skin from becoming dry.

Things to Remember

UV rays are far stronger at 5,000 feet than they are at sea level. In addition to the direct exposure, they reflect off of shiny surfaces; sand, and water increasing exposure. The resulting glare is harsh and annoying. UV sunglasses will protect the eyes as well as increasing the comfort level. A broad-brimmed hat may also add to comfort on some of the tours.

Consider the effect of the UV rays on your skin as well on your visit to Albuquerque. The strong UV rays cause the skin to burn far faster at the higher altitude. A sunscreen with a minimum of 30 SPF applied every two hours when on a tour, shopping, or exploring on your own is a necessity. It is important to use the sunscreen even on the rare cloudy day in Albuquerque.

The Crown Plaza Hotel, the location of the 2016 AVSA Convention, offers fantastic views, especially from the upper floors with all rooms facing either east or west. The sunrise and the Sandia Mountains can be viewed from the east rooms while the colorful outstanding Albuquerque sunsets and volcanoes on the far mesas can be

viewed from the West. The full service hotel has a fitness room, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, and large outdoor patio.

Crowne Plaza

The Crown Plaza has three onsite restaurants; The Ranchers Club, The Cantina Lounge, and Stone Street. The popular Ranchers Club is a 5-star, ranch style restaurant where the food is prepared on a Gridiron over such aromatic wood as hickory or mesquite. The menus include domestically raised meat, seafood, and game. It features entertaining live piano music in the lounge on Wednesday through Saturday evenings. *Albuquerque Magazine*, recently named it as the number one hotel restaurant. The Cantina Lounge features a lighter menu and a happy hour. Stone Street offers a wide variety on the menu.

The Crown Plaza is centrally located, just two and half miles from Old Town, three miles from the University of New Mexico, and two and a half miles from major shopping centers. Public transportation is readily available with Albuquerque Ride bus line stop nearly. This particular route travels to the shopping center as well as downtown and the Alvarado Transportation Center (bus and train hub).

A commuter train, the Rail Runner, can be boarded at the Alvarado Transportation Center, northbound to Santa Fe and south to Belen. A colorful Rail Runner is painted with an image resembling the state bird, the roadrunner, in bold red and yellow. It features two levels in the rail cars permitting excellent views of the landscape.

Rail Runner

The sixty-mile trip north to Santa Fe travels through The Sandia, San Felipe, Santa Domingo, and Cochiti Pueblos. These are a few of the oldest settled areas in the United States. Some of the landscape has been left untouched over the centuries.

Glimpses of the villages and mission churches can be seen from the train. (*The Pueblos request that the passengers refrain from taking pictures while travelling through their land.)* The Jemez and Sangre de Cristo mountains can be seen in the distance. The Santa Fe Depot is just across the tracks from shops, boutiques, and restaurants. It is only an eight-block walk to the Santa Fe Plaza. The free shuttle is also available to travel to the Plaza.

The southbound Rail Runner from Albuquerque travels through the Isleta Pueblo, Los Lunas, and Valley Air Park, to Belen. Bus transportation is available at the terminal.

Wear comfortable shoes when joining one of the convention tours or exploring on your own. In addition, don't forget to have your camera with you to record your great experiences when visiting New Mexico.

See www.visitabq.org for information on events scheduled at the time of your visit. Click on the "Special and Coupons" tab at the top for discounts that may be available.

Enjoy Painting the Land of Enchantment With Violets when attending the exciting 2016 ASVA Convention.

Three Meetings A Month

By Jeri Anderson

My violet club, Tucson African Violet Society (TAVS), offers three meetings a month. No, you do not have to attend all three meetings. Once-a-month is plenty for me, but it's really nice to have the option to attend a different meeting if something prevents you from attending your normal meeting.

You may wonder – How can a club operate as one, if there are three separate groups? TAVS does operate a little differently than most other affiliates. Our Executive Board plays an important role in keeping the club unified.

TAVS has one President and one Treasurer. Each meeting group has a Vice-President and a Secretary, as well as an AVSA Representative and a Parliamentarian. The President is not required to attend all meetings and, when not attending, can ask the Vice-President to run any meeting. This might sound complicated, and it does take a bit of planning ahead, but it works rather well. It just requires a bit more paperwork, especially if there is business to be conducted. Most club business is handled by a few Executive Board meetings so the regular meetings can have more time for presentations.

Motions may be made at any of the meetings. A motion made at one meeting has to be written on a 3 x 5 card so the motion can be presented to the other two groups and a vote taken. This can take some time as the motion has to be discussed and voted on at all three meetings. A motion will clear within a month's time span. The Secretaries take minutes at their respective meetings and emails meeting minutes to all members.

Sign-up sheets go from group to group for volunteer positions to help with our show and sales. The President takes the sign-up sheets to each meeting and gives them to the Show Chair prior to any show or sale. And, there is a list that gets passed from meeting to meeting to take down ideas for program topics.

In the late spring, the President and VPs meet to decide upon summer workshops and monthly program topics for the coming year. Then comes the job of rounding up presenters. The VPs are responsible for calling everyone in their respective meeting groups to find willing members to present on a monthly topic.

The educational program covers the same topic for all meetings during a month. Sometimes a presenter will volunteer to do all three meetings and other times each meeting will have a different person presenting. No matter the presenter, the topic will be the same. There are educational programs for each regular meeting September through November, and January through April.

Regular meetings are held during the week at assisted living facilities located on opposite sides of Tucson. At the east-side location, TAVS hosts a night meeting (7:00 – 9:00 pm) on the first Wednesday and a day meeting (9:30 – 11:30 am) on the second Wednesday of the month. At the north-west location, we hold an afternoon meeting (2:30 – 4:30 pm) on the second Thursday of the month. The variety of locations and times has allowed our club to become a sizable group of over forty members.

TAVS also offers several joint meetings, which are held on Saturdays and are attended by all three groups. In December, we have a potluck where the educational program is a short talk given by each person who attended the previous AVSA convention. Another joint potluck is held in May for a game of violet bingo.

In June, July and August, TAVS hosts Saturday hands-on workshops each month. We rotate the summer meetings between our two meeting locations.

With joint meetings in December, May, June, July, and August, plus a fall sale, and a spring show and sale, our TAVS members from all three groups are together enough to keep from feeling like three separate little clubs. Three meetings offers flexibility and variety to better accommodate the needs and desires of our members.

To see more information about TAVS check out our website: www.tucsonavs.org.

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence *Email:* missjennae@yahoo.com

Amazon.com is the largest Internet retailer in the United States. It is safe to say that almost everyone has heard of this website. You can literally buy anything from Amazon, including African violets and related products.

A quick Google search for Amazon.com brings links to site right up. Once the site comes up, searching is easy. There is a large search bar across the top. You can choose to search "All," or you can search by department. A click on the "All" button brings up a short, drop down menu of various departments. It is easiest to search "All" and simply type in African violet.

Pots are by far the biggest selection, and they are available in a variety of departments. Plants, food, self-watering pots, fertilizer, and soil options also pop up. Again, a simple click of the mouse will take you where you want to go.

Amazon acts as a clearinghouse for businesses. A variety of plant and garden businesses were represented in this search. A perusal of the site revealed business listings for Jordan's Jungle. Three standards were available for $7.99. Hirt's Gardens offered three minis for $15.99. Shipping was an additional fee on the plants. This cost ranged from $4.49 to $6.55.

Amazon offers a one through five star system for evaluating products and sellers, with five stars being the best rating. The viewer can also read comments left by purchasers, to help determine whether they want to buy from that vendor.

At the bottom of the page are sponsored links. These are third party, paid advertisements. A click on a link will take you directly to the related business. The Violet Barn is one of these links.

Amazon is an example of marketing at its best. The page will also automatically display other related products that you might be interested in. These might be something you searched for in the past, or they might be related to your current search. There will be photos of items that are frequently purchased together. There is also a section that shows what other customers bought that were related to the item of interest.

One item that is for sale from a variety of sellers is the book, *You Can Grow African Violets; The Official Guide Authorized by the African Violet Society of America, Inc.* This book is available from a variety of sellers. I was able to refine my search of the left side of the page. I had options to choose the condition of the book. Condition options range from like new, very good, good, and acceptable.

Shipping was another way to refine the search. Amazon offers free shipping on many items to members that have signed up for Amazon Prime. This service is available for an annual fee of $99. It does offer other benefits. Many e-reader books are free through Prime, as are movies and more. I did not find free shipping on the plants I looked at, but did find it on other related items.

Perhaps one of the best things about Amazon is that it now allows you to support your favorite charity. To support the AVSA, simply go to www.avsa.org At the bottom of the home page you will find a button for the Amazon Smile program. Click on it, and you will go straight to the Amazon Smile website. This is a part of Amazon, and operates exactly the same. Your account is the same, and you shop in the same manner. However, 0.5% of your purchase price will be donated to the AVSA.

After I connected with Amazon Smile, I got an email welcome. I was given the opportunity to install something called Amazon Assistant. This would ensure that I would always go through Amazon Smile. However, my browser (Firefox) did not want to join. If this happens, you will be given the opportunity to override the browser.

To start using Amazon Smile go through the AVSA link. This will automatically keep your purchases linked to this non-profit group. After that, simply do a search or Google smile.amazon.com whenever you wish to shop on Amazon. This is a great way to support AVSA, Inc.

Rolling Pink Cloudburst

Exhibited by: *Erika Geimonen*
Hybridized by: *L. Lyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano*
Standard Trailer

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Optimara 'MySunshine'

Exhibited by: *Barbara Jones*
Hybridized by: *Holtkamp*
Medium Standard

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Optimara Rose Quartz

Exhibited by: *Kathy Lahti*
Hybridized by: *Holtkamp Miniature*

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Imp's Fairy Berry

Exhibited by: *Charles Rowe*
Hybridized by: *J. Jackson Miniature*

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Jolly Star

Exhibited by: *Ron Davidson*

Hybridized by: *H. Pittman*

Semiminiature

A BETTER WAY TO WATER

By Pat Hancock

This may not be new to everyone, and I can't take credit for the idea, but I am so impressed with my plants being grown with this method that I had to pass it on. David Rollins told me about it at a Dixie Convention. When I later asked him if he "invented" it, he said the idea came from someone else but he thought of the black felt.

To use this watering method, you will need light-weight black felt that can be purchased as Wal-Mart or JoAnn Fabrics; egg crate lighting louver plastic sheets (light diffuser) that can be purchased at Home Depot or Lowes, and large Perma-Nest green plant trays (11"x22"x25") that can be purchased from Cape Cod Violetry. You need to cut the egg crate to fit the bottom of the tray or a little larger so that it sits on the little lip at the top of each tray. If you place the egg crate sheets in the bottom, you might want to put Styrofoam blocks, or something similar, to raise them up just a bit. I have tried both ways and I prefer resting them on the lip, especially for miniatures and semiminiatures.

Cut the felt the width of the egg crate, allowing extra length so that the felt is long enough to wrap around and lay underneath. Thus, when fertilizer water is added to the tray, the excess felt flaps in the tray wick the water up onto the top. The wicked plants are then placed on top of the damp felt that both waters them and provides them with the humidity that they love.

I feel it is probably necessary to wick the plants grown in this way. I use 4-ply acrylic yarn cut about four or five inches long, with half of it placed in the bottom of the pot and half outside the pot. When I pot plants in 3" or larger pots, I add about 1" extra coarse perlite (available in hydroponic stores) on top of the wick and then fill in with potting soil. The perlite provides extra drainage and air spaces and violet roots seem to really love it. Perhaps it reminds them of their original growing places in the rock crevices of Africa.

So far, I have not let my trays go completely, dry but David tells me there is nothing to worry about if this should happen. They will pick up the moisture again as soon as they are watered. I have never seen plants grow as fast as they do with this method, and they look such a "healthy green" color. Many of my baby plants in 2" pots have buds in only a little more than 1 month. Large plants are grown only one per tray. Standard size plants (12" - 15") are grown two or three in each tray. Plants in 3" or 4" pots can be six or eight in each tray, depending on the spread of their foliage.

Try this method on just one tray and you will become a "believer." I think it is the easiest watering method that I have ever used, and it sure beats washing water wells.

(It doesn't beat chocolate, but close!)

Reprinted from The Violet Connection,
Mel Grice, Editor

Red Bandito

Exhibited by: *Anne Nicholas*
Hybridized by: *H. Pittman*
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Some Notes on Girl Foliage

By Dr. Jeff Smith
Indiana Academy • Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306 • Jsmith4@bsu.edu

Do you know the difference between "boy" African violets and "girl" African violets? No, it doesn't have anything to do with the reproductive parts in the flowers, but instead what type of foliage the plant has.

One of the original 10 African violets developed by Armacost and Royston Nursery of Los Angeles, CA in the 1935 was named 'Blue Boy'. A mutation of the foliage in 'Blue Boy' showed up at the Ulery Greenhouses of Springfield, Ohio in 1941. The mutation had a predominant splotch of white on the leaf where the petiole attached to the blade. The leaf margins were also ruffled. In 1942, Ulery Greenhouses received a United States patent for the mutation and called the plant 'Blue Girl' (Robey, 1988). Since that time there has been a confusion of what the terms "boy" and "girl" meant for African violets. The terms refer to a specific type of foliage or leaves, not the sex of the plant.

Lasswell's Girl Friday'
Single dose of the 'girl' gene.

'Senk's Bad Girl'
Double dose of the 'girl' gene

Girl foliage was one of the first mutations to be studied and described scientifically. Dr. Sheldon Reed published a summary of his breeding experiments of certain traits in African violets in 1954. Girl foliage was one of the traits in that study. His experiments concluded that the girl mutation was a genetic dominant and was always expressed if present. He noted that two copies of mutation (homozygous dominant) intensified the effects of the mutation in the leaves. Plants with the double dominant combination had leaves that were more highly scalloped and ruffled. The white area was somewhat larger. More importantly, Dr. Reed noticed that the girl mutation also affected plant size. Plants carrying the mutation, either in single or double dose, were reduced in size compared to siblings that lacked the mutation. Many of the "miniatures" of the early 1950's and 1960's carried the girl foliage trait. Even today, most of the registered plants with girl foliage are classified as miniatures or semi-miniatures in plant size.

Dr. Reed commented that the foliage of the double dominant plants was often very unruly. This trait was noted quickly by the early hybridizers who avoided the double dominant plants as possible show material. The double mutation caused the leaves to form a tight ball of foliage, a characteristic that was undesirable for show. It can be safely assumed that most modern cultivars with girl foliage have a single copy of the mutation. A group of exceptions, however, are some of the David Senk hybrids. Plants such as 'Senk's Bad Girl', 'Senk's Girl with Attitude' and others are likely plants with the girl foliage mutation in the double dominant form. These plants are highly unusual and are grown for their curiosity interest. They will never make good show plants because the foliage is highly lobed and ruffled.

Two more leaves from 'Senk's Bad Girl'
A somewhat normal leaf (L) and a highly lobed leaf (R) that can develop with the double girl gene.

While the white or light green spot on the base of the leaf where the petiole joins the blade seems to be universal in all girl foliage mutations, the amount of scalloping or ruffling can be highly variable. The variation in the edging is due in part to the number of copies of the dominant gene, but there are likely variations in the girl foliage mutation that explain part of this variation. Sometimes a lack of scalloping in girl foliage is called a modified girl leaf. For example, the cultivar 'Persian Prince' is sometimes described as having modified girl foliage. The leaves are pointed at their tips and the foliage shapes very nicely for show.

Girl foliage has been combined with other leaf traits such as Tommie Lou variegation as shown in 'Baby Cakes', 'Electric Cowboy', and 'Heavenly Girl'. Crown variegated girl foliage is seen in 'Blizzards' Little Girl'. Nearly every flower type and color can be found on girl foliage. There are also girl foliage trailing plants such as 'Jersey Girl Trail' and Shiawasee Trail'. The later plants are very compact trailers probably due to the miniaturizing effect of the girl mutation on plant size.

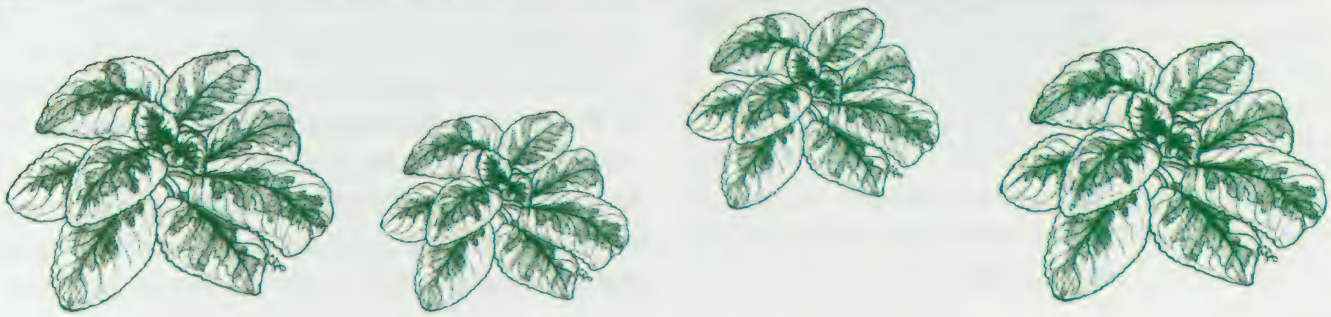
Many assume that all girl foliage plants are descendents from 'Blue Girl' but this is not necessarily the case. The girl foliage mutation has spontaneously originated on several occasions. Examples include: 'Ma's Melody Girl' which is a girl mutation from 'Ode to Beauty', 'Rebel's Gingham Elf' a girl mutation from 'Optimara Gemini, and 'Snoopy Girl' a girl mutation from 'Snoopy' (from the list of sports registered since 1980). Other unrelated and undocumented girl foliage mutations are probably out there as well.

In summary, girl foliage is one of our oldest and best-documented African violet mutations. Hybridizers have combined many other traits on to this unique foliage type and exploited the reduction of plant size caused by the mutation to create miniature and semi-miniature plants. The mutation has originated spontaneously on several occasions, something that is a bit unique but not unexpected for dominant mutations. This is a trait that will continue to be of interest to hybridizers in the future. Although confusing to outsiders, true African violet growers will always know their "girls" from their "boys."

Literature Cited:

Reed, S.C. 1954. African Violet Genetics. J. Heredity. 45: 225-230.

Robey, M.J. 1988. African violets, Gifts from Nature. Cornwall Books.



Contest Entry

A Better Way with Bloomstalks

By Kit Love

Her Name is 'Buckeye Country Gal.' She is without a doubt the most beautiful 'Buckeye Country Gal' I have ever seen. Every flower is perfect, large and almost completely covered in fantasy markings.

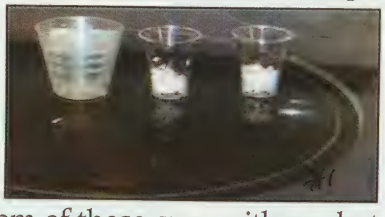
I have always grown 'Buckeye Country Gal,' and have had some really nice ones, but this one is special.

When we get a really great African violet, leaf propagation is probably not the best way to go, and we stand a better chance of an exact copy of our special violet if grown from a bloom stem. Unfortunately, for me, bloom stem propagation has always been "hit or miss," until now.

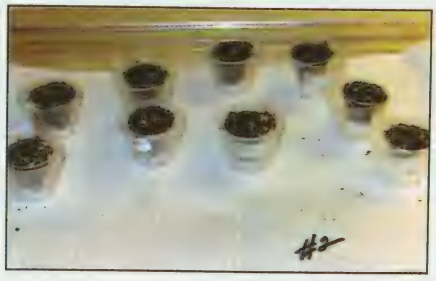
I decided to experiment, doing things very differently than I had in the past.

Now, I am getting ninety-five to ninety-eight percent success rate in growing bloomstems. That may sound too good to be true, but it is. And here is how it is done:

1. I soak the bloomstems in warm water, with a couple of drops of Superthrive, anywhere from fifteen to thirty minutes while I prepare the cups. I am using tiny, clear, Communion cups, from my church.



2. I make three holes in the bottom of these cups with my hot iron. (It is important to have three holes for drainage.) I add a little perlite in the bottom of the cup, and then add my potting soil.
3. Next, I put each little cup in a 1oz. medicine cup, with the name and date on the side. CAUTION! The medicine cups are important, because the smaller cups are not stable, and will fall over!



4. Now that the cups are prepared, trim the bloomstalks to size, and dip the end in Clonex. I then set them on their cup to dry for ten minutes before I plant them.

5. Now, set 4 - 6 cups in a small plastic container. I have used those that lunchmeat comes in, but I recently found a Glad product the right size. You need stability when opening the container to water.

6. I buy food storage containers at the local grocery store. I place the lid, top-down, and set the little plastic container with the pots inside the lid of the food storage container and snap it together.

The inverted food storage container is now placed about six-inches from the lights. I check them once a week, and if they need water, I use an eyedropper and fish fertilizer.

I found that you don't need large bracts (leaves) on the bloomstalk. Just to see if this method would work with less than perfect bloomstalks, I put down three of another plant. They had very tiny leaves. I now have one with babies, and the other two are still alive!

Contest Entry

Destination: Convention 2016

By Dolores Nelson

Growing violets in New Mexico, my retirement dream! In the new house, my north-facing window seemed adequate for my new African violets. The sun is so strong here that I had to put a thin curtain over the east-facing window adjacent to my growing area. I thought my plants looked good, until last spring when I hooked up a small florescent light stand to sprout some tomato seeds. As soon as the light was up, my violets perked up and started looking much better. I realized then that I needed a dedicated growing area, lights, and a shelf to store my grooming tools.

I wanted to keep my collection small, so I bought a two-shelf unit. I was almost out of room the first day, but I reasoned that I could have five plants for show that I groomed and pampered, plus other plants that could share the lights from a short distance away. I would give away some of the AV babies I was propagating. Actually, the table was wide enough to accommodate several plants in front of the stand.

When the light fixtures arrived I put them together, even getting the light bulbs in correctly! I was proud of my tool-using skills. I could "*do it myself*." The trouble began when I plugged the lights into the timer and they didn't turn on. I called a MAN, my good "fix-it" friend, to come see why these lights would not come on. The first thing he asked was, "Do they have an on/off switch?" He reached to the end of the fixture, found the switch and the lights came on. I was pretty excited but embarrassed as well...*why didn't I think of that?*

I bought the cart because I wanted to be involved in the Albuquerque Convention. I had a few violets and acquired a few more from club meetings. I wanted to keep my collection small but I forgot about having several plants so that the "best-looking" one could be entered. And I was starting late, I need two years to get my plants ready, and to start my dish gardens and terrariums. The race was on to see what I could do in the short time I had; eleven months.

The light cart did not make my plants grow perfectly at first. I had adjusted them to be on twelve to twenty-four hours from Day One, causing some problems around the third week. They went from reflected light to strong, overhead light in twenty-four hours. I noticed that a *Strep* had burned leaves and there were tight centers on all of my standard violets standards; the leaves did not grow out from the rosette and variegated leaves had changed. The temperature was correct but all-in-all things weren't right.

I thought I knew how to grow violets even though I hadn't "grown for show" in a number of years. I had all the books, and experience, but I was not as focused on my overall results. I felt confused about timing, and insecure about fertilization. Luckily, my club published a member's manual with exact dates for culture here in Northern New Mexico, plus the most successful practices from club members. We also had informative speakers, and this is when I saw the "holes" in my methods.

Things are looking better since I corrected the timing on the light stand. I am on track, and now it is time to fill out the paperwork for convention. (There are so many things to do; I might need to stay five days!) My first concern was to be sure I could attend the Judging school; Wednesday morning at 7:30? Since I live 160 miles from Albuquerque, I will have to stay overnight Tuesday. Three of us are sharing a room at the hotel, so it will be convenient just to be upstairs from the Showroom and Sales Room!

There are so many things to plan for before I go, such as how to get my plants there in perfect condition. Each entry needs its own box, with a lid and packing to insure that the leaves are not broken; so I'm saving boxes and packing material. I'm also thinking about the trip home, and the plants I will buy (did I say "buy"?) and pack up for the return trip.

We are still a long way from the show date, and there will be weeks to groom and pamper my violets. I will enjoy every minute of it. I feel that growing and grooming violets is therapy for stress of any kind. My violets are totally dependent on the care I give them and it feels good knowing that I am giving them the best I have. Because of that I know they will reward me, if not with a blue ribbon, then satisfaction for a "job well done" in the time I had.

Garden Club Talks: A Golden Opportunity

By Paul Kroll

It has been my pleasure to speak to garden clubs over the years. Sometimes I am asked to speak on African violets and sometimes on the other gesneriads. I have one of these talks coming up shortly and thought I would write my thoughts in order to share them with other AVSA members.

Always find out how many members are expected to attend the meeting. I always take leaf cuttings for each person. I prepare the leaves just as I would if I were to be putting them down for my own propagation, but instead of using pots, I plant them into a corner of a baggie and seal it up. I always label the bag with the plant's name, size, etc. [I used to use the First Class labels, but now that I am a Mac user, I cannot print them off, so I use a marker instead.]

I constructed two large cardboard trays with two rows of V-shaped troughs. I place the planted leaf cuttings into these trays for transport to the meeting.

I have found that instead of a power point computer presentation, having the members come as close to the table where you are speaking works best. I do take a few small restaurant trays with me so that I can pass around items for close-up viewing:

- A fully grown plant with a long neck
- a plant with at least one sucker easily visible
- crowns of a trailer which are ready to be potted
- soil medium and my propagation medium
- "alternative" pots: solo cups, restaurant cups, etc.
- A pot readied for mold potting, with new soil in it, and a proper sized hole for the old plant to be set in.
- Your tools: xacto knife, tweezers, large knife, sucker plucker, etc.
- Anything else you want them to see close up.

Talk as you are doing things:

- Tearing off outer leaves of a large plant
- Scraping the neck
- Cutting off the bottom of the old root ball
- Preparing the mold pot for the repotting of that plant.
- Cutting leaves for propagation
- Labeling the new pots with the plant's name

I always take a plant of each size: large, semi-miniature, miniature and micro-miniature in a rosette form and a trailer. I also take plants that are green foliage and some that are variegated. The audience is always surprised when I pull out

a very large AV which has been disbudded, with its beautiful foliage and ready to bloom, or in bloom if I happen to have one available at that time.

Talk about the growing requirements of AVs: temperature, light, water, fertilizer, etc. Give them the basics and entertain their questions.

Now, here comes the 'golden opportunity"! Take along copies of the *AFRICAN VIOLET MAGAZINE*, *CHATTER* (The magazine of the African Violet Society of Canada), *GESNERIADS* (The magazine of the Gesneriad Society). Talk about these societies, their magazines and the conventions, etc. Give the information about your local AV Club and the location and dates of your upcoming show(s), etc. These garden club members love plant shows and sales and will attend. Our local club has been fortunate to have had a few of the garden club friends come to clerk for the judging of our shows. We are happy to have them and they love it!

Utilize these speaking engagements to spread the word about our favorite plants and all the fun we have!

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Primulina bipinnatifida

***Exhibited by:** Bill Price*

Eye On Design

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Anything Goes
BJ Ohme

Night and Day
Fran Russom

Dish Garden
Suzanne Roberts

Dish Garden
Linda Hall

Blow
Ron Davidson

Groove
Glenda Williams

Hot Jazz
Glenda Williams

Natural Garden
Suzanne Roberts

Contest Entry

Propagating Streptocarpus Leaves

Josh McKinney • Goshen, KY

In a previous article, I chronicled my journey in growing *Streptocarpus* plants. After my success in growing 'Tunnel Vision,' a purple Thompson hybrid, I was ready to try other varieties. Again I was daunted by the price of shipping fully-grown plants so I decided to try to propagate some new plants from leaves. I first visited the commercial growers' websites, but I could not find any that sold leaves, only plants. I therefore navigated to eBay next, and found a seller near me who offered *Strep* leaves as "buy-it-now" because I prefer not to buy auction-style. I ordered an assortment of six varieties from terri1213 on October 13th and received them on or around the 16th. She even sent gift leaves!

I cut holes with scissors in the bottom of 3 oz. plastic drinking cups and some 8 oz. punch cups for the larger leaves. Then, I prepared some soilless mix with extra perlite and put some perlite into the cups. I cut with scissors (cleaned with isopropyl alcohol) the basal ends of the leaves before planting them. If the leaves were too long to fit in the zippered storage bags, I cut the tips. I lightly watered the cuttings, and covered them with plastic bags over top of them (but did not seal them). I put them in an aluminum foil baking pan and put the pan underneath a 24-inch grow light for ten hours a day. I turned the pan from time to time and watered the cuttings carefully, using small amounts at a time when the soilless mix began to become dry. By December 5th, some of the leaves had sprouted plantlets!

Since some were closer to the light fixture than others, that may explain why they sprouted first.

The varieties from the first photo are as follows: **'Bristol's Hei Mei','** a Robinson hybrid with very dark blackish-burgundy flowers.

'Salmon Sunset,' a Thompson variety with salmon flowers with dark red and yellow throat;

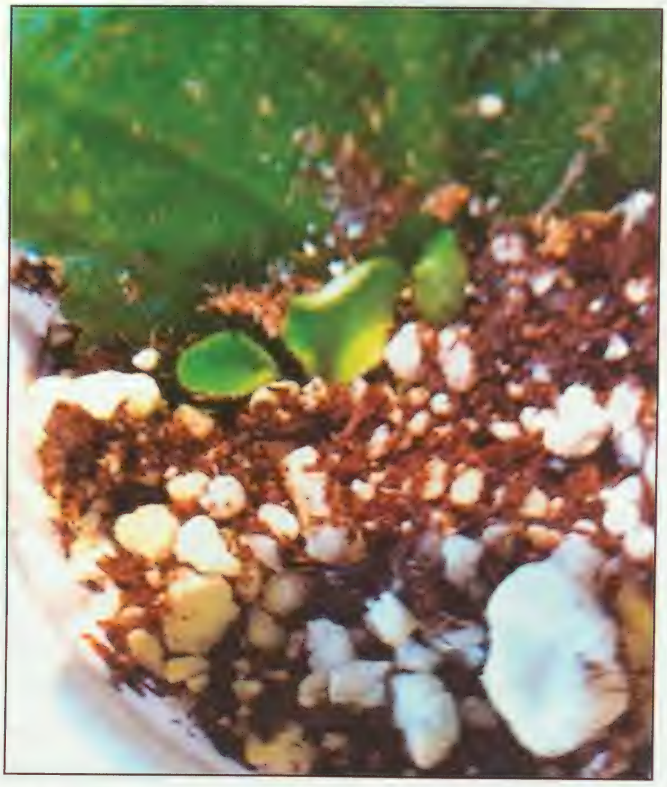
'Rose Halo,' a sport of 'Roulette Cherry' with an white round center with fuchsia pink halo;

'Rose Halo' enlarged to show detail.

'Neil's Lovin,' a Miller hybrid with light purple/ lavender upper lobes, yellow lower lobes with maroon streaks;

'Something Special,' a Sorano variety with light two-tone purple flowers with near black near lower throat and pale lavender upper throat.

'Wow,' a Kleszczynski hybrid from Poland with large frilled bicolor blooms. The upper half is bright purplish-red and lower lobes are bright yellow.



No matter how anxious you may be, resist the temptation to tug on the leaves while they are growing. This can disrupt the growth process and you will have a longer wait to see the babies. Additionally, cut off any brown leaf margins with scissors or a sharp knife. If not removed, they will lead to rot. The babies should be ready to pot up once they are large enough to handle.

Don't be afraid to order items off of eBay, just remember to do your research first. Does the seller have good feedback? Is it available as 'Buy it Now'? (Important if you would like to stay on budget, thus avoiding costly bidding wars). Does the seller provide accurate descriptions and photos of the item? And the most important, the order should ship during favorable weather (avoiding temperature extremes whenever possible.) Unpack your order as soon as possible after it arrives and report any issues to the seller. It is also a good idea to have your pots and soilless mix prepared before your leaves or plants arrive.

Have fun growing your new *Streps*! Varietal descriptions cited from: http://www.streptocarpus-info.com

Paul Kroll's Soil Recipes

Amended Fisher's Mix

8 quarts peat moss
(Fafard, or any other good brand)
4 quarts perlite
5 quarts vermiculite (coarse)
2 quarts sterilized soil
1 quart horticultural charcoal
1 cup bonemeal
1 cup horticultural lime
4 quarts milled sphagnum moss

Propagation Mix

4 parts vermiculite (coarse)
parts milled sphagnum moss
1 part perlite
1/2 part horticultural charcoal

Light Mix

For baby plantlets, species *Saintpaulia* and *Episcia*
1 part amended Fisher's mix
1 to 2 parts Propagation mix

No Lime Mix for epiphites [add no lime at all]
Aeschynanthus, Columnea, Nematanthus

EXTRA LIME MIX [2 to 3 times the lime]
Boea, Gasteranthus, Gesneria, Petrocosmea, Primuliina

From *The Violet Connection*,
Official Publication of the Ohio State AVS

Can Mealy Bugs, Mites, and Thrips become Resistant to Insecticides? Here is the latest research on what to do.

By Neil Lipson

I have been told that my articles can be too technical, but with this particular subject, I really needed to get into the "nitty gritty" and share the whole story. Because any of these insects can devastate your African violet collection, I could never live with myself by "dumbing down" the facts and not give you, the reader, the complete information on exactly what to do. Sad to say, when it comes to this subject, if you don't follow the rules, all of your plants could die, and I'm sure none of us want that.

(I'll provide a concise summary at the conclusion of this article if you want to skip down to it, but this material is so interesting and riveting (to me), I encourage you to read as much as you can tolerate.)

MEALY BUGS

I have heard that some growers complain that they have mealy bugs that are resistant to insecticides. Are they really resistant and if so, what do you do? I found a plan of attack to solve this problem. This is a multi-pronged approach to increase the efficacy of the product you are using.

I have seen many Internet posts on whether mealy bugs (sometimes called mealies) cannot be stopped. I never had this problem in the last decade, so I had to find out what was going on. I always isolate and water the soil first with the Imidacloprid solution (not Marathon), let it stop dripping and then the AVID spray once it is placed in any plastic bag (or freezer bag) and then immediately seal. No bugs can survive that because I don't abuse the constant use of treating when I don't have to. Most of the top growers I know also don't have this problem because they use similar techniques and isolate for very long periods (which I'm not a fan of).

I personally grow my plants in a room located as far from the entrance as possible, but I realize this is not an option for some of you. I also bring as few plants into the growing room from other growers unless I really want the plant and I will treat all new plants coming into my collection. When I show a plant at one of the shows, when I return home, I will immediately pull off all the blooms, squirt the soil with an Imidacloprid solution and spray the plant with AVID, leaving it in the sealed freezer bag for as long as a month.

MITES

In *Growing to Show* by Pauline Bartholomew, she said the one insect that was the easiest to stop were mites ("They're so easy to kill."). Even today, I have been told that one thorough application of AVID will stop them cold. In my 35 years of growing, I've had them twice, and used AVID both times which solved the problem. They only spread from leaves of one plant that touches another. AVID, unlike other insecticides, is translaminar, which means it penetrates the leaves and other parts of the plant when sprayed on the leaves, buds, and all visible parts of the plant. It will not, however, be absorbed nearly as well, if you water the plant with the solution, which I do not recommend. Insecticides that penetrate from the roots are called "systemic insecticides." Most are topical only.

THRIPS

I wrote a VERY detailed article on thrips in one of the earlier editions of AVM (Nov.-Dec. 2013,

p. 30) but the bottom line is if you COMPLETELY disbud the plant, including the smallest buds for about six weeks, you cut off the food supply, and they just don't survive, even if they burrow into the leaves. They can only live in this manner for two weeks. I discussed this in the previous article that at this time AVID usually does work. Thrips from outside in the garden are almost always vulnerable to most of the top insecticides on the market, as long as you don't use them on outdoor plants (which will increase the chance of insecticide-resistant bugs).

I have heard that some growers will use Orthene (Acephate), which really is NOT recommended unless you're an expert who knows how to apply it, as well as knowing how long to stay out of the room until it degrades to a safe level. The only time I have seen it used was with Chilean thrips, which DO live and eat leaves to survive. This species of thrips are almost microscopic but fortunately are NOT common to the United States. My recommendation is avoid using it and stick with the much safer insecticides that are available.

TECHNICAL INPUT FROM EXPERTS ON RESISTANCE TO INSECTICIDES

If you want to skip the technical details, you can go straight to the conclusion below. I personally, found these details REALLY interesting, however, I know that this can bore the average reader.

I spoke with Dan Gilrein from Cornell about the resistance of various insecticides with mealy bugs, and I received an excellent description of what occurs, which I am quoting directly from this correspondence with me:

> "There is not much work done on resistance in mealy bugs to Imidacloprid. There is one paper documenting wide variation in susceptibility among vine mealy bugs from different regions of California, but the authors noted that the material was still effective at usual application rates. I don't know of any actual laboratory proof showing resistance in mealy bugs, but there may be research going on I am unaware of (it hasn't been mentioned in my ornamental entomology circles however).
>
> "I am aware that mealy bugs can be difficult to control with insecticides, including Imidacloprid, probably for several reasons. They are cryptic, settling out of reach of contact insecticides (Imidacloprid is used both as spray and systemic applied to soil) including sometimes (e.g., citrus mealy bug, a common pest of African violets) on roots. Mealy bugs often have a very waxy coating that helps repel insecticide sprays. Some can survive off the plant for weeks. They may also be able to regulate their feeding to reduce intake when a systemic insecticide is detected, or at least one entomologist I know has mentioned that. Based on the latter, the answer to your question ***might*** be 'yes.' (I asked, Can mealy bugs be resistant to Imidacloprid?)
>
> "With these in mind, I would not necessarily conclude there is physiological resistance in mealy bugs to Imidacloprid, but one could easily make an argument for **behavioral resistance** to Imidacloprid (and to many insecticides in general).
>
> "We have done a number of trials to find materials that work well for mealy bugs. Efficacy seems to vary according to species, with Madeira mealy bug being among the tougher ones to control. Home gardeners, even serious ones, may not have the same access to products (or active ingredients) that commercial growers have. Coupled with the issues noted above, mealy bugs are understandably often much bigger pests in house plants than in some commercial settings."

Dan Gilrein then sent me a follow-up email:

> "A note sent around to other ornamental plant entomologists (who would know) returned no responses concerning Imidacloprid resistance in the usual mealy bugs seen on African violet (or other house plants). As noted I found nothing from a quick literature search on the topic. I suspect much of the problem getting control with this insecticide (when used systemi-

cally) is an ability mealy bugs may have to remain quiescent without feeding (including off the plant for several weeks), limited translocation of the active ingredient into plant parts where the insects are feeding, possibly some inherent tolerance in the insects themselves, and an ability to re-colonize from other infested plants nearby. Mealy bugs can be hard to detect when very small and African violets offer very good hiding places for them. As a spray their waxy covering provides some protection from contact and being cryptic helps escape exposure as well."

I then asked Joyce Stork, who has extensive experience with insecticide resistant pests, and she said:

"Acephate (Orthene) still works just like it always did on the nonresistant thrips. When the product was over-used, one or two offspring hatched with an ability to survive. Over time those super thrips mated and soon most of the population left in the space were resistant. As it works, when you stop spraying a product for a long time, the bug begins having a few offspring who aren't resistant. Sometimes pulling an old product out will work surprisingly well again. Good commercial operations never use one product. They use a multiple attack (which is called Integrated Pest Management - IPM) so that any pest who is resistant to one type of product, will be controlled by another different type. Hence they use chemicals, beneficial insects, mechanical methods (like sticky traps and screens), and biological products. They all work on some of the population and give much better control in the long run."

Conclusion

One important point is to "rotate" insecticides when things are really bad so any of the above insects can't get used to one of them used over a period of time. Mites are usually killed in one application, and thrips can be starved to death merely by removing blossoms for A FULL 6 WEEKS, OR LONGER.

I spoke with a few of the African Violet Commercial growers, and I was told that the liquid version of Imidacloprid in more effective than Marathon (which is Imidacloprid granules). This is available in the product Bonide Tree and Shrub liquid used WITHOUT fertilizer at a dose of 1/2 ounce per gallon to "drench" just the soil OFF OF THE MAT WATERING OR WICK WATERING area. Don't let the name "Tree and Shrub" mislead you into thinking that it's only trees and shrubs. It 's the Imidacloprid in it that is what you're looking for. I usually just squirt some on the soil and NEVER dip it in a bucket like some growers will do. Let the excess drip through, and only after it stops dripping, should you then place it back on your watering system, mat, or wick setup. Before you buy the Bonide product, first check that the Imidacloprid amount is 1.47% AND there are no fertilizer numbers on it (like 1-2-1). This is where most growers have problems. As an example, here is the Bonide link for the ingredients: http://www.bonide.com/assets/Products/Labels/l609.pdf

I used to use Bayer Tree and Shrub which also had 1.47% Imidacloprid, but could not find the version without the fertilizer, so I stopped using the product.

There is a non-chemical method to stop mealy bugs called BotaniGard® made by BioWorks, but this will be the subject of another article. If all else fails, Google it and use it according to the instructions.

I would like to thank Dan Gilrein, Joyce Stork, and Carolee Carter for their help in this article, and if you have a serious problem, I am available to talk to you by phone.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern time. He will return your call.

2016 VACATION GUIDE

These AVSA commercial members would be happy to have you visit them when you are in their area. They are listed here by state. Please carefully note the contact information, hours, and if visits are by appointment only. Enjoy the education and inspiration that visiting these businesses will afford you!

Georgia
Travis' Violets
Travis Davis
2064 Ellen St.
Ochlocknee, GA 31773
229-574-5167 (day) or 229-574-5236 (night)
E-mail: travisviolets@aol.com
9 – 5 (Mon – Sat) with appointment.
African violets
www.travisviolets.com

Kansas
Patty's Plants and Antiques
Patty Daniel
920 Millington
Winfield, KS 67156
620-402-6282
E-mail: patty@ppa.kscoxmail.com
10:00 AM – 5:30 PM Tuesday – Saturday,
1:00 PM – 6:00 PM, Sundays by appointment,
closed Mondays
We have over 5,000 sq. ft. of antiques, African violets & gesneriads, begonias, ferns, miniature terrarium plants, & exotic finches housed in a historic old post office one block east of Winfield's Main Street at the corner of 10th and Millington.
www.pattysplantsandantiques.com

Missouri
Dave's Violets
David Harris
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Springfield, MO 65804-0220
417-887-8904
E-mail: plantman57@att.net
By appointment only
Sinningias, African violets and other gesneriads.
www.davesviolets.com

Michigan
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Steve and Donna Turner
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Southgate, MI 48195
734-285-5560
E-mail: starznstreps@comcast.net
Hours by appointment.
Standard African violets, leaves, chimeras, streptocarpus and soil.

New York
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Inc.
Paul Sorano
14 Mutchler St.
PO Box 249
Dolgeville, NY 13329
315-429-8291
E-mail: info@lyndonlyon.com
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM (Mon –Fri)
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM (Sat)
Noon – 4:00 PM (Sundays, May and June only)
African violets, gesneriads. Located just ten minutes off I-90 in the foothills of the Adirondack Mtns.
www.lyndonlyon.com

The Violet Barn
Ralph and Olive Ma Robinson
7209 County Road 12
Naples, NY 14512
585-374-8592
E-mail: robsviolet@aol.com
Shop and Greenhouse open 12-5 PM,
Tuesday thru Saturday. We have African violets, gesneriads, collectable houseplants and supplies.
www.violetbarn.com

Ohio

Buckeye Violets
Pat Hancock
7132 Shurz Road
Middleton, OH 45042
513-425-0308
Call for appointment.
Buckeye series African violets, other African violets, soil and pots.
www.buckeyeviolets.com

Tennessee

Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp, Jr.
1501 Lischey Ave.
Nashville, TN 37207
800-443-2290 ext. 137 Russell
E-mail: sales@optimara.com or
russell@optimara.com
7 AM-4 PM Monday to Friday
(call 1 week before arrival for possible schedule tour time)
NO SALES
African violets
www.optimara.com
www.myviolet.com

Texas

Hill Country African Violets and Nursery
Ken Froboese
32005 I. H. 10 West
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Buckeye Tea Party

Best in Show/
Best Standard
Dixie AVS 2016 Convention
Exhibited by:
Kurt Jablonski
Hybridized by:
Pat Hancock

Photo Credit: **Mel Grice**

SENIOR JUDGES - IMPORTANT NOTICE

Senior Judges may apply for a renewal examination between May 1 and September 1, 2016. Send request to **Barbara Werness, 12354 Naples Street NE, Blaine, MN 55449. Include** a check for **$5.00 payable to AVSA** and **proof of three blue ribbons** as per AVSA Handbook, 2011 edition, page 88. For a printed hardcopy of the exam, allow three weeks for delivery. Examination may be received by email as a Microsoft Word attachment if so requested. Please specify if it will be used as electronic copy or handwritten hard copy. **A printed hardcopy (not email) of the exam must be returned to Barbara Werness by October 1, 2016, for grading.**

Those Advanced Judges who meet the requirements and wish to apply for their first Senior Judge examination, send a request to Barbara Werness. Include a check for $5.00 payable to AVSA. Also send the following items of documentation of eligibility per AVSA Handbook:

1. List of all judging schools attended, grades, etc.
2. Signed schedule of five AVSA shows judged (copy of signed title page with all show information is sufficient.)
3. Verification of three blue ribbons earned per AVSA Handbook, 2011 Edition, Page 88.

Allow three weeks for delivery. Schedules and cards will be returned if a SASE is included with proper amount of postage. Applications postmarked after September 1, 2016, will be returned and application may be made next year.

No exams will be returned until after October 15, 2016. Please include email address and you will be notified of receipt of your exam or include a self-addressed postcard and it will be returned upon arrival of exam.

Barbara Werness
bwerness@comcast.net • 763-754-3918

AVSA Legacy Society

At the 2008 convention in Tulsa, the African Violet Society of America, Inc. Board of Directors established the AVSA Legacy Society to recognize those individuals who have made a planned deferred gift of $1,000 or more to the Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund. These gifts will help to secure the future of AVSA in years to come.

Planned giving can be in the form of a bequest in a will or beneficiary designation in a life insurance policy. A bequest can be a specific amount or a percentage of a total estate. A beneficiary designation of a specific amount can easily be made by calling an insurance agent.

Those individuals who have been recognized to date as members of the AVSA Legacy Society are:

Douglas Allen
Lynn Allen
Carolee Carter
John Carter
Judith Carter
Margaret Farrand
Dolores Gibbs
Linda Hall
Nancy Hayes
Sue Hoffmann
Terry Klemesrud
Anne Nicholas
Richard Nicholas
Janet Riemer
Joyce Stork
Lynne Wilson

Those who wish to become members of the Legacy Society and help assure the financial future of AVSA may make a donation or obtain further information from John Carter, 1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012-8509 or johntcarter@valornet.com.

Coming Events

May 6 & 7 - MONTANA
Billings Bloomers AV Club
Annual Sale
St Andrews Presbyterian Church
180 24th St. W
Billings, MT
Friday, May 6: 10-4
Saturday, May 7: 10-3
Info: 850-6489 or 652-1388

May 7 - WISCONSIN
Crosstown AVC
Annual Spring Sale
Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave
Madison, WI 53704
Hours: 9am - 4pm
Info: Alice Peterson
(608) 850-9740
Email: peters56@tds.net

May 7 – BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA
Vancouver AV & Gesneriad Society Annual Show/Sale
Floral Hall, VanDusen Garden
5251 Oak St, Vancouver, BC
1:00p.m. - 4p.m.
Info: Iain James
Email: jhoya02@shaw.ca

May 7- NEW JERSEY
African Violet Club of Burlington County
Annual Judged Show/ Sale
Medford Leas
Retirement Community
Arts and Social Wing
Noon – 5pm
1 Medford Leas Way
Medford, New Jersey
Free Admission
Info: sskalski@comcast.net

May 7 & 8 – FLORIDA
Violet Patch of South Florida
11th Annual Violet
Display & Sale
Flamingo Gardens
3750 S. Flamingo Road
Davie, FL 33330
May 7 – 9:30 – 4:30
May 8 – 9:30 – 4:30
Info: Peggy Madison
954-999-0472
http://www.violetpatchofsouth-florida.com/

May 14 – CALIFORNIA
Burbank & Montrose
African Violet Societies
Display & Sale
Saturday, May 14
9am – 4pm
Descanso Gardens
Van de Kamp Hall)
1418 Descano Drive
La Canada Flintridge, CA
Info: Susan Eyraud
(818) 951-3597
Luis Pineda (323) 236-0104

May 21 and 22 - NEW YORK
African Violet/Gesneriad Society of Western New York
Annual Judged Show and Sale
Galleria Mall
Cheektowaga, New York
May 21: 12 noon - 4 pm
May 22: 12 noon - 4pm
Info: judyoneil1945@gmail.com

June 25 – TEXAS
First AVS of Denton
10th Annual Summer Workshop
Saturday, June 25, 2016
First Presbyterian Church
Denton, TX
www.favsd.org
for more information

BOYCE EDENS RESEARCH FUND

Karen Broadway • 10028 N. 58th Lane • Glendale, AZ 85302-1334
Donations received from December 1, 2015 – January 31, 2016 • Total $400.25

Geneva
Indy AV Club, Indianapolis, MN
(Club Disbanded)

Multicolor
Karen Plourde, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA

Two-Tone
Columbus AVS, Grove City, OH
Elizabeth D. Lebert, Clinton, CT

Thumbprint
Annette N. Hershkowirz, Commack, NY
Jean Corkill, Salinas, CA
Martha Nix, Ballwin, MO
LaDonna Hopson, Yorktown, NY

Contest Entry

"Marie Antoinetting" by a Beginner Grower

By Angela Perkins

My local women's club had donated a beautiful planted of the African violet, 'Crystallaire' and scented tea candles, to raise money for the town's library. I stared at the plant, made a wish and placed my raffle ticket into the hopper. I knew it would be mine. Several weeks later, I received a phone call that I had won the plant.

Elated with my new win, I went to the local gardening center, purchased Miracle Gro African Violet Potting Mix and a large ceramic pot. I plopped my plant in the new potting mix and was rewarded for several years with bursts of blooms. The plant was displayed on the kitchen table. Guests would come over to the house and admire the "World's Largest African Violet." It was an enviable freak of nature.

And then one day it stopped blooming. The stem was forked like a trident and the tines of green leaves had coiled around the pot. I repotted it in one type of soil and then another but the plant refused to recover. It was dying.

Frustrated that I was potentially committing herbicide, I went to the Internet and tried to find an image of a plant that looked like mine. I found several pictures but I kept thinking, 'My stem is coiling several times around the pot. These photos only show an inch of stem.' Eventually I spotted a severely deformed plant that looked like mine. Necking was the name of my plant's disorder.

Happy that I found a solution, I looked further down the page. I winced. There was a photo of a serrated knife being used to hack the stem of a violet like it was sapling oak that had grown in the middle of a field. 'I can't do that to a plant.' I kept searching for other solutions.

I only found one answer to cure my ailing gesneriad. You must chop the plant or it will die. 'Chop or death,' sounded like a mantra for a hockey team not a cure for a houseplant. I was hesitant but accepted the challenge.

I did not want anyone to witness me crying while I surgically stabbed my favorite plant. So I waited for a time when I knew that everyone would be out of the house but me. I covered the kitchen table with the high school sports section of the newspaper and began to bang on the sides of the pot. The plant would not come out. I tried a butter knife around the edges of the pot but I could not get to the roots that had begun to protrude out of the base of the pot. I tugged and tugged and then it happened. Snap. I broke it. Cursing the air and my root bound plant I went to the bathroom and sat on the toilet. 'Don't panic.' My head was racing. Could I save this plant?

I went back into the kitchen and grabbed the thatch of leaves that I had cracked off of the mother plant. 'You will grow,' I commanded. I scooped out handfuls of moist and compacted soil from of my six-inch terracotta pot. The root ball I flung on the baseball scores. I then used my hand to scrap clean the junk that had bonded to the sides of the ceramic. The pot was clean enough; so I then began to shake the bag of soil into the pot until the dirt was halfway to the top.

I took a spoon and scraped the neck of my plant until it was raw and the juices like blood covered my fingers. I jammed the weeping raw neck into the soil and then began to cover the wound with scoopfuls of potting mix. I heaped the soil until all of the stem was covered. 'I'm almost done.'

There was a final step that all the websites recommended for the guillotining of a wayward plant. And that was to tent the recovering violet with a clear plastic bag. I took my grungy fingers and rummaged through my recycling bin in hopes of finding an appropriate plastic bag. I found yellow bags from ShopRite, white bags from A&P, red bags from the Asian food market, green bags from the local newspaper and black bags I had

gotten from the local bodega. But I didn't have a clear bag in all the mounds of plastic.

I then had a spark of inspiration. Saran Wrap!! But that would cling to the plant and suffocate it. I needed to create a tent for the plant. What makes a tent? Tarp and tent stakes. Well, I had the tarp but I needed tent stakes. I opened my utensil drawer and glanced at all the potential tent stakes. I could use my butter knives or spoons. Then I saw the red paper sheathed chopsticks.

I plunged four chopsticks around the edges of the pot and placed my potted plant into the kitchen sink. Next, I took my Brita water pitcher to drench the soil. After the soil was thoroughly saturated and water was gushing out of the drain hole I stopped watering. I plugged up the sinkhole that I created with fresh dry soil.

It looked ready to wrap. I took the Saran Wrap and began to wrap the pot and chopsticks like I was encasing a bedbug-ridden mattress. Once the sides were strong enough to be load bearing I stopped wrapping. I cut the cellophane and placed one sheet of eighteen-inch by twelve-inch rectangle onto of my open-air tepee.

Finally done, I cleaned up and made a silent prayer to the growing goddess that my plant would thrive. Every day I removed the Saran Wrap rectangle to air out the plant and replaced the temporary terrarium's ceiling. Three weeks after my repotting adventure, my plant began to put out new leaves. I ripped off the tepee and dug my fingers into the soil and saw roots shooting out of the stem. It worked! Within two months buds were bursting out of the plant and 'Crystal-laire' was back. I was now the owner of the "Worlds Smallest Biggest African Violet."

APPLICATION TO JOIN
2375 North Street, Beaumont, Texas 77702

The African Violet Society of America, Inc.
www.avsa.org 409-839-4725 avsa@earthlink.net

Membership runs one year from the date paid and includes 6 issues of the *African Violet Magazine*. Dues are not refundable.

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Were you encouraged to join AVSA by a particular individual, vendor or group? If so, please enter their name here: _____

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Historical Reflections on AV Terms

By Paul Kroll

At a recent AVSA Judging School, questioning turned to an interesting topic of terms used to describe African violet blossoms and foliage. For those of us who have been involved with growing for many years, most of the terms being questioned were familiar. We forget that newcomers to the hobby may not know about the history behind these terms that are commonplace today. This article is, by no means, meant to be a true historical reference, but rather a brief listing of explanations and/or stories behind some of the terms we use today. The AVSA HANDBOOK is a wonderful source of information with descriptions of foliage and blossom types; well illustrated and described. If you do not own a copy of this wonderful book, you should! It is not only for judges, as so many people believe. It is an Introduction to African violets, and deals with growing, showing, and judging them. Perhaps the reader might like to open the HANDBOOK to those illustrations as this article is read. The following is only an enhancement of those illustrations.

African violet foliage types are sometimes described as "boy" or "girl". A chuckle always comes from the group assembled when they are told that this term has nothing to do with the sexual capabilities of the plant. Plain foliage is sometimes labeled as "boy" foliage and the foliage labeled as "girl" comes from the first sport of a leaf of 'Blue Boy' which came up as one baby plant that had a scalloped edge and a whitish spot at the juncture of the leaf blade and the petiole. That plant was named 'Blue Girl' and since that time, any foliage which has that appearance is called girl foliage.

The variegation types that are common today also have a history of their own. Tommie Lou variegation was first experienced on a baby plant from a leaf, which came up with a white edge around the green leaf. It was named after the woman who grew this plant, 'Tommie Lou Oden.' Speaking of 'Tommie Lou,' the plant named 'Happy Harold' was introduced by Harold Reinhart. After many failed attempts, he was "happy" to finally set seed with 'Tommie Lou' in the parentage.

Iain James (Vancouver, BC, Canada) writes: In the book *All About African* Violets 1949, by Montague Free, there are several references to varieties exhibiting what we would now describe as crown variegation. These include, but are not limited to, albino versions of 'Blue Girl' and 'White Lady'. This reference, being the 1949 edition, means crown variegation preceded 'Tommie Lou' by at least 9 or 10 years - Tommie Lou variegation, according to articles written by Tommie Oden, appeared in 1957. Thus the chronology for variegation would be crown/Champion then 'Tommie Lou,' and finally, with the sporting of 'Lilian Jarrett' (initially Tinari's released it as solid green but somewhere along the line it sported), mosaic variegation.

Ethel Champion, a hybridizer from Syracuse, New York, became fascinated by what we now call crown variegation. This is best described as the center leaves of the plant appear variegated and the leaves become more green as they mature. Many of Ethel's hybrids had this type of variegation and so 'crown variegation' is sometimes referred to as "Champion" variegation.

Ethel also was determined to get mosaic variegation on some of her hybrids. Probably the most famous plant with this type of foliage is Lilian Jarrett Variegated [that is the proper spelling of Lilian, with only a single L], which was introduced by Tinari Greenhouses. Ethel was successful in hybridizing efforts, which produced a miniature that looks just like the standard and she named it 'Midget Lilian.' This type of variegation also appeared on several other plants of her creation, probably the most famous is Sterling Trinket, a semi-miniature. There are also some standard plants with the mosaic variegation.

The old foliage types of DuPont, Supreme, and Amazon foliage have all but disappeared from the plants in cultivation today. No doubt they exist out there somewhere, but we rarely, if ever, see

them. These types of foliage were named after the plant(s) which bore those names such as 'Lady DuPont,' etc.

Descriptive names of blossom types also bring history into play. Everyone can easily see the differences between single, double, star, etc. Some other terms, however, point back to their historical significance. The plant named 'Lady Geneva' was the first to have a white edged bloom, hence the term Geneva-edged. That has stuck and the terms are used interchangeably.

The wasp type bloom has appeared on many plants over the years and was widely cultivated by Jim Dates. Many of his varieties had the wasp shaped blooms, which appear almost always with bustle foliage. This is where the back of the leaf sports a bustle type of growth.

The descriptive term "fantasy" is applied to a favorite coloration of streaks of different color, or of a differing shade of color on the background color of the bloom. I have not been able to find a reliable source for the term fantasy, but I do believe that AVSA and the Gesneriad Society are the only plant societies who use this term to describe this patterning on blossoms of African violets and *Streptocarpus*. I am most eager to learn more about the history of the term fantasy, should anyone be able to enlighten us further.

Iain James sent me the following information which is also from the book listed above: The earliest reference to the term "fantasy" I can now find is the 1949 edition of Montague Free's book *All About African Violets,* which lists a cultivar called 'Fantasy'. Here's what he had to say about it:

> "Not everyone will like this variety with its blooms speckled and blotched in lavender and purple tones with no two flowers alike. It should appeal to collectors because it is different."

I think it's safe to assume therefore that, given the name, this cultivar is more than likely the source for the subsequent use of the term "fantasy" in describing blossoms.

Other early references found so far of a fantasy bloom on an African violet are listed as 'Fantasy Girl' (R. Behnke/H. Cox), #218, 1952. Another early one is Clown Boy #1437 (M. Rand) 1964. These names were found thanks to the help of Thad Scaggs.

It is my intent to bring some of the history of these terms to the fore and perhaps help hobbyists to understand the significance of the terms used.

Jersey Girl Trail

Second Best in Show/Best Trailer
Dixie AVS 2016 Convention
Exhibited by:
Kurt Jablonski
Hybridized by:
Bob Kurzynski
Miniature Trailer

Photo Credit: **Mel Grice**

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

May 30, 2015
Kansas City, Missouri

The Annual meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was called to order by Third Vice President, Sue Ramser, at 3:20 p.m. in Salon AB of the Holiday Inn, Kansas City Airport, Kansas City, Missouri. The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag were led by Dr. Richard Nicholas. Sue Ramser introduced the officers and presented the President, John Carter.

Elmer Godeny, Secretary, reported a quorum was present.

Elmer Godeny, Secretary, read the Standing Rules for the Annual Meeting, and they were adopted. A copy is attached to these minutes.

President Carter appointed Paula Bal, Chair; Susan Hill, and Glenda Williams to approve the 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes. Bob Clark was appointed Time Keeper. Sue Hoffmann, Jeri Anderson, and Mary Lou Harden were appointed Tellers. Jeri Anderson reported the minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting were approved.

Laurene Jones, Resolutions Chair, presented the Courtesy Resolution, which is attached. The Resolution was adopted.

Pat Hancock, Nominating Committee Chair, submitted the following nominees to serve as Directors until the close of the 2018 Annual Meeting: Joe Bruns, Illinois; Debbie McInnis, Ohio; Carol Semrau, Minnesota; Penny Smith-Kerker, Texas; and Candace Baldwin, Arizona. The floor was opened for additional nominations. Elmer Godeny, New Jersey, was nominated from the floor as a Director by Ruth Rumsey. Bob Clark moved that nominations cease. This motion was seconded and passed. Written ballots were submitted to the membership, and the Tellers were retired to count the ballots.

While waiting for the Tellers' report, Laurene Jones read "Lest We Forget", the list of deceased members, which is attached. The following names were added: Dennis Hale from North Carolina, Ann Koopman from Pennsylvania, Ida Bushkuhl from Texas, Dorris Thurston from New Mexico, and Jackie Jones from Iowa.

The following announcements were made. Convention Director Kathy Lahti announced that she has visited Orlando and has bids for three properties to serve as the site for the 2017 convention. She is searching facilities in New York for the 2018 convention. Winston Goretsky stated the Judges' Handbook will soon be available in an electronic version. A licensing server has been contracted to track owners and subscribers. Elmer Godeny thanked everyone for awards which have already been donated for the 2016 convention. Anne Nicholas asked members to let the Library Committee know of good programs to offer to affiliates.

There was a temporary adjournment during which time Janet Riemer conducted the Open Forum. Janet stated the Tinari Challenge had been met. Candace Baldwin has a suggestion for the next calendar and will talk with Winston Goretsky about it. The current membership is at approximately 3,800. Candace Baldwin asked how many first time convention attendees will be at the installation dinner tonight. Approximately 50 people stood.

The meeting was called to order again by President Carter.

The Tellers returned with their report. Mary Lou Harden stated 111 ballots were submitted, 109 of which were valid. President Carter re-read the Tellers' Report and announced the following were elected as Directors: Joe Bruns, Debbie McInnis, Carol Semrau, Penny Smith-Kerker, and Candace Baldwin.

Sue Ramser moved that the ballots be destroyed. The motion was seconded and passed.

Pat Hancock, Nominating Committee Chair, submitted the following nominees to serve as Officers: President, Winston Goretsky; First Vice President, Dr. Richard Nicholas; Second Vice President, Sue Ramser; Third Vice President, Susan Anderson; Secretary, Mary Corondan; and Treasurer, Edna Rourke. No nominations were received from the floor. The Officers were elected by voice vote.

President Carter announced the Officers and Directors would be installed at the installation banquet that evening.

President Carter recognized the retiring Directors: Jeri Anderson, Janet Castiglione, Patricia Daniel, Sue Hoffmann, and Cindi Nofziger. Also recognized as retiring were Pat Hancock, Nominating Committee Chair; Judy Carter, Convention Awards Chair; Elmer Godeny, Secretary; and Kathy Lahti, Convention Manual Chair. The retiring Officer, Directors, and Committee Chairs were thanked for their service.

Sharon Shannon extended an invitation to attend the 2016 Annual Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Kathy Bell will serve as Show Chair.

President Carter stated The Violet Barn received the annual membership commission by obtaining 61 new members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Corondan

_____

COMMITTEE TO APPROVE

_____

Paula Bal, Chair

_____

Susan Hill

_____

Sinningia 'Chippewa Merry Martha'

Exhibited by:
Penny Smith-Kerker

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL AFRICAN VIOLET BUYING ONLINE

By Pat Wilson

As more and more of us AV lovers find it fun and easy to discover new varieties of AVs on the Internet, these are a few tips to make the whole process easier for you and for the seller.

Always read all the information accompanying a violet listing or description. Most sellers will tell you the pertinent information about that particular AV for sale or bid. For example, size – standard, semi-mini, or mini. Are you buying a well-established, rooted plant, in a pot, a rooted baby plantlet in a solo cup, or a freshly-cut leaf or leaves? Is the plant that you see in any photos the specific plant you will receive, or an example of what the AV is like?

Does the seller combine plants and/or leaves for shipping? Do they offer reduced shipping on combined items, or is each item charged the full shipping price quoted in the description? Some sellers will give this information within the description.

Many sellers include the AVSA First Class registration description with each AV offered. That FC registration description usually mentions whether the AV is mini, semi-mini, or standard, as well as hybridizer and description.

Remember, African violets are living things, not factory stamped out identical items. Each AV will be somewhat different than its fellows, just as human siblings are different from each other in the same family. Your growing environment can vary somewhat to a whole lot based on where you are located, your water source, temperature ranges, humidity and light. Phoenix, Arizona is a very different environment than Upstate New York or Central Florida.

Most AVs today are hybrids, the offspring of two animals or plants of different breeds, varieties, species, or genera, especially as produced through human manipulation for specific genetic characteristics. Some are very stable offspring and some will revert back to one or more characteristics of the parent plants. This can occur for a variety of reasons. But, it is not an indicator that the seller has cheated you.

If you have a problem, communicate politely with the seller. Keep in mind the adage, "Keep your words sweet, for you may have to eat them."

Please do not send messages in this language that has come about due to tweeting and messaging. Use complete sentences. When you ask about a specific plant, identify it by name. If you want to know about shipping cost, provide the seller with your zip code and what you are interested in buying – plant, leaves, etc. Provide your seller with a current telephone number.

Each seller wants you to have a pleasant experience and receive a healthy African violet. The better the experience, the more frequently you will be returning. Make yourself a welcome visitor by remembering to treat the seller the way you would like to be treated. You would be surprised how many friendships have grown from the anonymity of a simple message on the internet.

K's Snowy Montana

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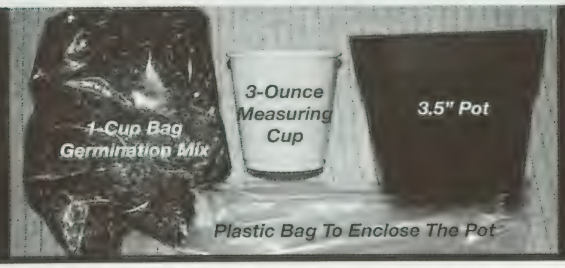

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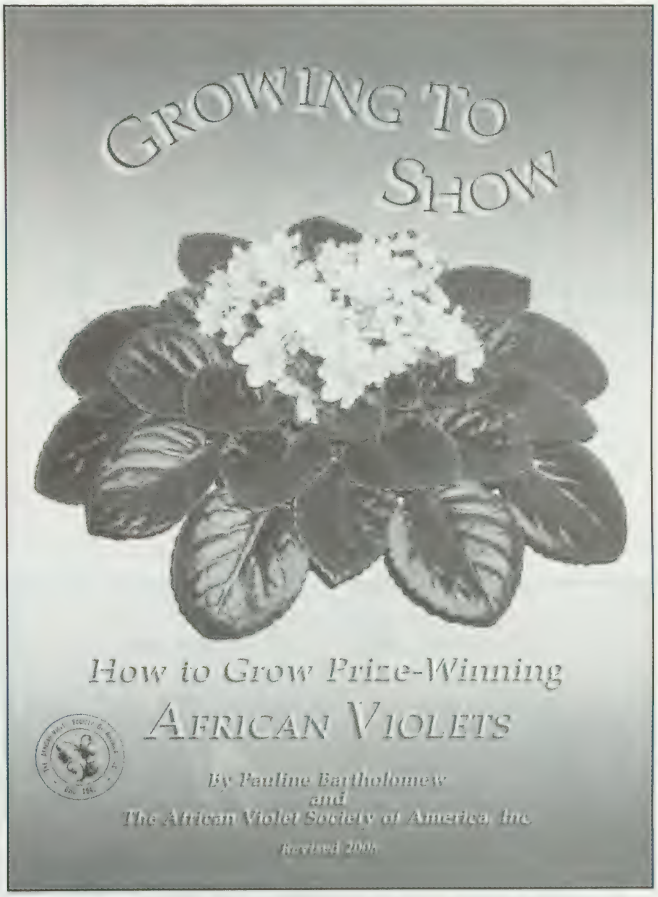

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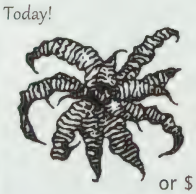

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ARTICLES BY MEMBERS, COLUMNISTS AND MEMORIALS: Send to Editor.

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African Violet

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OFFICERS

Winston J. Goretsky, President
32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada T3L 2B2
email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Dr. Richard Nicholas, 1st Vice President
3113 Deerfield Dr., Denton, TX 76208
email: randanicho@aol.com

Sue Ramser, 2nd Vice President
2413 Martin, Wichita Falls, TX 76308
email: ramserwf@wf.net

Susan Anderson, 3rd Vice President
4040 E. Maldonado Dr., Phoenix AZ 85042
email: sanderson122@cox.net

Edna Rourke, Treasurer
99 Old Stratford Rd., Shelton, CT 06484
email: APapillon@aol.com

Mary Corondan, Secretary
434 Plumwood Way, McKinny, TX 75069
email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

John Carter, Immediate Past President
1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012
email: johntcarter@valornet.com

STAFF

Ruth Rumsey, Editor
2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702
email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Cindi Nofziger, Advertising Manager
1035 Lakewood Dr., Albany, OR 97321
email: ccnofziger@comcast.net

Lynne Wilson, Publications Chairman
645 Hudson Ave., Tampa, FL 33606
email: wilsonav@tampabay.rr.com

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

Hello everyone,

Summer is now upon us, except for our friends in the Southern hemisphere, who have an opposite season to us in the Northern hemisphere.

Congratulations to the Albuquerque African Violet Club, for hosting such a fantastic Convention and Show, we had a great time. I was very glad to meet so many of you at convention in Albuquerque. I've had many comments from attendees about how much they enjoyed their time. I was especially happy to make the acquaintance of Sara Trice, who was volunteering at the convention 'welcoming table.' Sara hadn't initially planned on attending the convention, beyond her volunteer time commitments, but realized how much fun we were all having, so she signed up and joined us for the whole week. What an inspiring lady!

If you've never been to an AVSA convention, it's time to start planning for next year. The African Violet Council of Florida is busy preparing for AVSA's 71st consecutive Convention and Show, May 28 – June 4, 2017. It will take place at the Wyndham Orlando Resort International, in Orlando, Florida. The theme of the show will be **"Gateway to the Tropics."** It's never too soon to start thinking about attending.

AVSA President, Winston J. Goretsky, received a framed proclamation from Texas Governor, Greg Abbott, stating that Winston is an Honorary Texan.

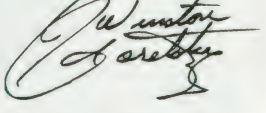
Laurel and I made it home safely with our plants intact and it was a busy few days getting all of the cuttings into propagation trays, and sorting everything else out. I hope your post-convention travels found you returning home without incident, and that by this time next year, you'll have some amazing new Show Plants for your local events in the upcoming year.

The *African Violet Magazine* with full-color printing has been well received by everyone, and it gives us the opportunity to enhance our articles with interesting photos. I hope that you are all aware of the "Article Contest," organized by Pat Hancock. Check out the details on our website and get involved. I'm really looking forward to reading all of the new submissions that people are already contributing.

Some of you may already be aware of the changes that are taking place around the genus *Saintpaulia*. When I was in China this past October-November, I had the chance to meet with Michael Moeller, who has been involved with the reclassification of *Saintpaulia* under the genus *Streptocarpus*. We were attending the 80th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Guangxi Institute of Botany, International Conference on Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Use of Tropical Plants, held in Guilin, China (Nov 1-4, 2015). He has provided me with information on this topic, which I will present in the form of an article in an upcoming issue of this magazine. This will provide you with a better understanding of what is happening, and what we are still waiting to discover, as it relates to our beloved African violet.

Don't panic, we are still awaiting the definitive details that will affect us, mostly with the taxonomy of the species, but have been assured that AVSA will remain the International Cultivar Registration Authority (ICRA) of the genus (sub-genus) *Saintpaulia*.

I hope you will enjoy a nice break over the summer months and look forward to seeing some of you over the fall, when state and regional shows commence.



Winston

Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

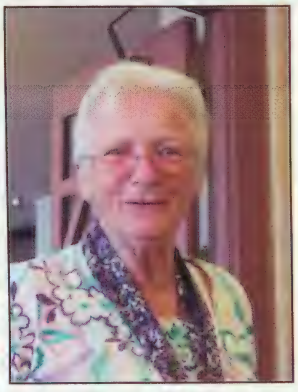
2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

It was fun seeing friends at the Albuquerque Convention, and making new ones.

I was so excited when my dear friend, **Bill Price,** won Best in Show with his perfectly grown species plant, *Saintpaulia diplotricha* 'Parker.' You'll see a photo of this plant on the cover of this issue of the AVM.

So many dedicated members went "all out" to make sure everyone had a great convention experience. The **Convention Chairman, Sharon Shannon**, was everywhere, helping new attendees, welcoming out-of-state AVSA members, and making sure that everyone was having a wonderful time.

Someone else who stands out is **Sara Trice**, who lives in Albuquerque and is a lot of fun. Sara greeted everyone as they entered the hotel and was quite popular, especially with AVSA members she hadn't met before. What a fun lady! Sara made quite an impression on everyone. She's loves African violets, and is a talented artist. Sara creates lovely note cards, featuring hand-drawn, colorful pictures of African violets.



Sara Trice

An exciting event for Amy and I, took place at the Awards banquet. We were privileged to present, on behalf of **Texas' Governor Greg Abbott**, a beautifully-framed proclamation, declaring that **AVSA's President, Winston J. Goretsky**, is now an **Honorary Texan.**

Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager, & AVSA President Winston J. Goretsky
Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

A very popular tour this year was a ride on the Sandia Mountain Tramway. Everyone had a great time on the tram ride, and were happy they had the opportunity.

Photos and information about African violets can be found on hgtv's website. http://www.hgtv.com/outdoors/flowers-and-plants/flowers/amazing-african-violets-pictures.

Office Update

By Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: avsa@earthlink.net

The AVSA office is settling in after another fantastic convention and show in Albuquerque, NM. We had a total of 280 registered this year. The show was beautiful as always and we had several vendors selling plants and supplies. I hope all of you can make it next year in Orlando, FL, Sunday, May 28 – Sunday, June 4, 2017. I would like to thank all the volunteers that helped out at the Registration and Sales tables. Your help is appreciated more than I could ever express. It was great meeting new attendees and catching up with old friends. I would like to say a special thank you to **Candace Baldwin** for organizing the informative meeting for those attending the convention for the first time and for making them feel so welcome!

I would also like to thank **Kathy Lahti**, AVSA Convention Director, for all her hard work to make the convention such a success. Also, **Sharon Shannon**, the Albuquerque Convention Chair, and all the volunteers from the local club for hosting such a great convention.

We now have the 2017 AVSA Calendar for sale on our website www.avsa.org/store-calendars. The cost is $15.00, shipping included. You can also place an order by email or send your order to the AVSA office. An updated Growers and Judges Handbook will hopefully be available towards the end of July or early August. We will have a downloadable version available as well.

Many of you have been receiving our weekly newsletter filled with growing tips and office updates. If you would like to sign up for our weekly newsletter that is sent by email you can send your request by email to the AVSA office, avsa@earthlink.net, or click on the sign up button on the home page of our website.

Please remember to keep your membership information up to date to ensure the delivery of your magazine and any other important notices from the office. If there are any changes with your club, please send those changes to Mel Grice melsgrice@earthlink.net and the AVSA Office avsa@earthlink.net.

I hope you all have a great summer and I hope to see you all next year in Orlando, FL!

Dean's Aquarius

Exhibited by:
Susan Arnao
Hybridized by:
C. Hobbs/H. Hobbs
Seminiature

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

A Family Portrait

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, OH
Email: <melsgrice@earthlink.net

Nematanthus 'Black Gold'

Nematanthus (neem a TAN thus) is a gesneriad genus native to the coastal rainforests of southeastern Brazil. It derives its name from the display of unusually long pedicels (flower stems) from the Greek words nema (or nemato) for threadlike and anthose for flower. *Nematanthus* are epiphytic shrubs growing in the open rainforest. They are usually found growing on trees in forest clearings, as well as along creeks and sometimes on rocks. Flowers are typically orange and yellow to combinations of white and maroon.

Nematanthus 'Black Gold' is an unregistered Bartley Schwarz hybrid created many years ago, so the parentage of this hybrid has been lost. It has small, blackish green, waxy leaves that trail quite nicely. Yellowish-orange pouch-shaped flowers contrast nicely with the dark foliage making this a desirable cultivar to grow. It requires higher amounts of light to bloom than can typically be provided by the typical fluorescent light stand. It blooms best for most people when grown in natural light such as in a greenhouse environment.

Nematanthus 'Black Gold' likes to be grown warm but not too warm. *Nematanthus* will drop leaves rapidly in temperatures exceeding 80°F, especially if overwatered. I grow mine mostly in hanging baskets filled with my basic AV mix that is almost half perlite. I have been experimenting with surrounding the roots with several pieces of long-fibered sphagnum moss in each pot. This seems to be helping maintain the consistent soil moisture that the plants prefer. I usually fertilize lightly every other time that I water.

Robert McMeel of Louisiana showed this beautifully grown specimen of *Nematanthus* 'Black Gold' at the Dixie AV Convention in Atlanta this April. He grew it in his warm greenhouse - so it was perfectly shaped and loaded with flowers. *Nematanthus* will perform much better for those of us who live in the northern states if grown outdoors in moderate to light shade than if it is grown as a houseplant. Of course, then you have the decision to make about whether or not to bring plants grown outdoors back into your collection for the winter. I personally choose to never bring anything that has been outside back into my collection.

Nematanthus 'Black Gold' is a hybrid so it must be propagated from tip cuttings. I have tried to root individual leaves like you would an AV, but this just does not work well for me. I like to fill a pot with as many tip cuttings as I can to make a nice specimen. I dip the bottom of each cutting in Clonex® rooting gel and place them in the pot which is then covered by a clear dome until the cuttings are well-rooted. *Nematanthus* like to be pruned and will reward you if you prune often.

I highly recommend *Nematanthus* 'Black Gold' to you as a rewarding plant to grow.

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com

Just when you think you have found everything there is to find about African violets on the web, something new pops up. Etsy is the topic of this column today. Etsy was originally founded as an on-line marketplace for hand-made goods. Wikipedia describes it as a "peer-to-peer commerce website, focused on handmade or vintage items, as well as unique factory manufactured items." At the end of 2014, there were 1.4 million sellers on Etsy.

The site is very easy to use. Simply Google the name Etsy, and it pops right up. The search feature is very easy to use, and typing in the words, "African violet" brought up a wealth of treasures.

On the day I accessed this site, 1,028 African violet-related craft supplies and tools popped up. Home and living had 753 options, jewelry 293, art and collectibles 198, and the accessories category had 70 entries.

A shop named Gabby Abby Crafts offered small crocheted flowers for sale at the rate of four for $1.00. Another shop, Very Big Jen, had African violet bottle cap pincushions. These were cute! At 2.25" tall, they were made of recycled soda bottle caps covered in felt. "The flower pots contained felt leaves and flowers. This useful little product was priced at $12.

Gubba Gumma took me back to 1993. They offered vintage, unused postage stamps. The stamps featured a magenta colored African violet. 20 stamps were priced at $12.

Tany Nogueira was selling watercolor, hand-painted clip art. An instant download of four images was priced at $5. These were very pretty, and well done.

Demonstrating that there is no end to craft creativity, Mermaid Dreams Jewelry offered a beautiful necklace. The focal point was a woven bead 1.5 by 1.5-inch flower. The purple and white flower did not require any imagination to know exactly what it represented.

While there are many opportunities to buy premade items based around the African violet theme, there are also opportunities for crafty people to order patterns and make their own. A shop called Noahs lady 4Patterns offered a quilt block kit with a 3D African violet theme.Happy Patty Crochet offered a pattern and instructions for crocheting an African violet plant in bloom. The crafter gets the pattern via instant download after paying the $5 fee. Colors and thread selection are left up to the person making the plant. The photos showed beautiful, realistic plants. These could be an excellent idea for door prizes or even club fundraisers. Chiang Mai, of Thailand who owns the shop also offers patterns for lilies, roses, and other flowers as well.

Another flower kit seller was The Miniature Gardener, from Lewes, United Kingdom. This seller had 1:12 scale paper flower kits. The materials made three small-scale plants in bloom. Pots were not included. Suggested uses for these tiny African violets included models and dollhouses. Again, this seller had other flowering plant kits available also.

Yes, one can even buy the real thing on Etsy. Take A Compliment was offering a young, rooted Optimara North Carolina II for $9.99. She had other African violets and *Streptocarpus* available from $14.99 up.

The disadvantage to buying from an Etsy shop is that the merchandise changes on a daily basis. Many of the items are one of a kind, and once they are sold they will not be offered again. However, many of the shop owners will custom make items, too.

You must create an account to purchase items on Etsy. Essentially, you are purchasing from an individual, while Etsy just acts as the clearinghouse for ordering. The individual ships their product to you. Creating an account is an easy process from the moment you click on the"Register" tab to do so.

All forms of payment, with the exception of cash or check can be used on Etsy. In addition to their own issue gift cards, sellers take credit and debit cards, Apple Pay and PayPal. Overseas buyers may be able to use bank transfers to pay for items. Again, checkout is very easy, and similar to any other online commerce site

If you want unique, Etsy is the place to find it! www.etsy.com

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

K's Tipsy Spritzer

Exhibited and Hybridized by: *Kathy Hajner*

2nd Best African Violet in Show: Commercial

Contest Entry

Color-Coded Liquid Fertilizer

By Bruce Pearson

In trying to combat algae growth in the wells of my wicked plants, I dye my fertilizer. This helps cut down the sunlight in the cup and helps inhibit algal growth. But if you grow with several different fertilizer formulas, unless you label each plant, it can get confusing as to what you have done. If you are like me, you cannot go back two hours later and be sure which plant got which fertilizer. Obviously, I am assuming you have more than a handful of plants.

I usually mix up a batch of fertilizer and bottle it in two-liter plastic soda bottles. Labeling a bottle or two is not a problem, but when you want to use the same bottle with a different formula it can be frustrating. It is tiring running out to the garage and hunting down more bottles. The "solution" (no pun intended) is to dye the liquid fertilizer solution using food coloring. I have done this for almost two years and can see no ill effects on the plants or color being affected on the blossoms. I use blue dye for growing, red dye for blossoming, and mix the two for misc. formula (it gives me a sort of purple color).

I use deli cups for my wells and the various colors are more attractive than the clear solution that usually shows algae. You can scatter plants helter-skelter on your benches and know at a glance what each plant is receiving. The bright colors are not unattractive to me. Heck, it may be a great decorating feature.

Another note, food coloring at our grocery store is inexpensive in the tiny bottles, and a little goes a long way. It is even less expensive buying 32 ounce bottles at Restaurant Depot™ for under $3. I have just purchased the second bottle of blue in two years. Larger sizes can be found at various specialty grocers or baking supply stores.

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS

- Thumbprint (Under $25)
- Two Tone ($25-$49)
- Multicolor ($50-$99)
- Geneva ($100-$499)
- Fantasy ($500-$999)
- Chimera (Over-$1000)

In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy
Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

In August of 2015, I finally bit the bullet and broke down my entire collection of African violets and gesneriads and restarted everything from cuttings. Problems with culture, pests and other difficulties had reached a point that starting over seemed to be the only solution to get things back under control. I also reached out to other collectors and growers of the *Saintpaulia* species to replace various clones that I had lost over time. I'm happy to say that things are looking much better these days and I hope to be able to keep better control of my collection.

One of the plants that bounced back is an F1 hybrid of *S. velutina* and the trailer Mather No. 21. (In the current taxonomy these would be listed as S, 5h cl. *velutina* and S. 5b cl. *grotei* Mather No. 21). When the plant flowered I posted a picture on Facebook with the interest group Saintpaulia species and First Crosses. The plant is a semi-mini trailer with leaves similar to the *velutina*. An interesting foliage type and growth form, but of course the flower are the single blue droppers from the two wild parents. Several members of the group admired the hybrid and asked when I would name and release the plant. They were disappointed to learn that I had no such intentions.

Hybridizers have a responsibility to the African violet community to name and release only the top quality plants from their breeding work. While the trailer growth form and *velutina* leaf type are interesting, the flowers are not an improvement over the wild type. I do not recommend releasing plants that drop their flowers no matter what their other redeeming features might be. Therefore, the plant did not meet my criteria as being worthy of naming and releasing. My hybrid – my decision.

I'm hopeful that this plant will serve as a base for future hybridization work. I'd like to get a nice flower and maintain the trailing habit and foliage form. Perhaps a cross with a semi-mini or miniature trailer with outstanding flowers will do the trick. However, I would expect it might take several generations of back-crosses to really combine nice flowers with the foliage type. I can see the eventual goal, but getting there is going to take some work, patience and just plain luck.

Another reason for not releasing this plant is that it is an F1 hybrid between two species clones. It looks like a wild plant (for good reason) and the identification of the species is already confused enough without adding F1 species hybrids into the mix. Labels don't always stay with the correct plants and there are too many misidentified species plants already on the scene. I don't want to contribute further to the problem.

So as you hybridize, please be responsible about what you name and release to the public. Be sure that the new plants are an improvement over our current hybrids and has passed the genetic stability test of three generations. Share your extra seedlings with those who will enjoy just growing them, but please be judicious in what you name, register and release.

Q: In your last column, you mentioned that most traits should be equally inherited between seed and pollen parent. Would this hold true for hybrids made between the species plants too?

A: Yes, as far as I've observed, it doesn't matter which plant is the seed parent and which is pollen parent in a species times species cross. The F1

offspring generally look intermediate between the two plants. I've also noticed that the F1 offspring don't show a great deal of variation; the plants are often nearly identical. This would suggest that many traits in the wild *Saintpaulia* species are highly fixed and homozygous. If you are looking for more variation in the offspring, try crossing a modern cultivar with a *Saintpaulia* species. The species make excellent seed parents because of the ease of getting to the stigma of the pistil, but their pollen sacs are also easy to work with making them good pollen plants too.

Q: My goal is to develop a plant with red flower and wide white edges. What should I use as parents?

A: If the white edges are Geneva edges, you'll want one or both parents to have the trait. Geneva edges are a genetic dominant trait which shows dose effects. Plants with two copies of the trait have wider edges than plants with single copies. If both parents show Geneva edges you'll have a better chance of getting double dose plants and wide edges.

As far as the red color, I'd suggest breeding red with red, or perhaps red with pink. Red with red should breed more or less true in the F1 offspring. Red is dominant to pink so this cross should produce a high percentage of red flowered offspring.

Your ideal cross might be either a red Geneva edge times itself, a red Geneva edge times a similar red Geneva edge, or a red Geneva edge times a pink Geneva edge. These options should all produce your goal.

Q: Many of the Russian hybrids seem to have big extravagant flowers. Is there a reason for this?

A: The only reason is that this is what the hybridizers have been selecting for in their plants. My understanding is that the large extravagant flowers are very popular with the growers and public. Traits such as plant symmetry and growth form are not as important. Consequently the early Russian hybrids had massive flowers and flower displays, but shaped very poorly for show. More attention is being paid to the foliage these days, but as a group the emphasis and selection has been on the flowers.

Q: The plants that I want to cross never seem to be in bloom at the same time. Is there a way of storing pollen for later use?

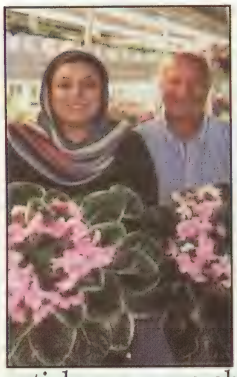
A: There have been reports of success in pollen storage by removing whole anthers and storing them dry with silica gel desiccant in small, sealed containers. If the containers are kept cool by refrigeration, not frozen, the pollen may keep for 2-3 months. This might stretch out your pollen to allow plants to overlap in blooming time. I'd suggest storing plenty of anthers as the viability of the pollen will decrease sharply over time and you'll want to have plenty left to work with in your crosses. Good luck!

Q: Are there links between the petal edges and the foliage edges? I seem to have noticed a number of plants with ruffled flowers that also have wavy foliage.

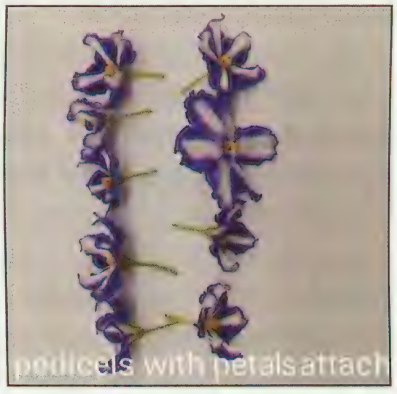
A: You have good eyes. Yes, the genes that cause the extra growth of petal edges giving us ruffled or frilled petals has a similar effect on the edges of the leaves. The gene is not linked in the genetic sense of two genes being expressed together, but instead seems to be a single genetic mutation that causes extra cell divisions on the edges of both petals and leaves. The increased number of cells causes the petal or leaf to buckle or bend. This trait can make the foliage difficult to get to lay flat for show although the flowers are often highly sought after. This gene appears to be a genetic dominant and shows dose effects. Plants with two copies of the gene will have flowers with more ruffles and more wavy foliage. Several variations of the trait also appear to exist suggesting there are multiple mutations of the trait.

Propagation of Chimera Violets by Pedicels

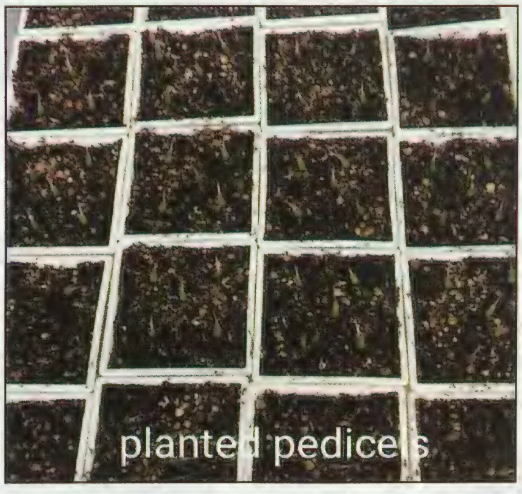
By Parviz Parvin Mehr



Sometime ago there was an article in the AVM, September/October 2015 issue by Ruth Coulson. She was reporting an unsuccessful experiment of propagating African violets by calyces just because of unfortunate bad weather conditions. At the same time of reading the article we were about to propagate chimera violets by flower peduncles. We decided that we would try her suggested way of propagating, and use the same method for propagating chimeras, as well as using the flower stems, peduncles.



We did take off petals and anthers but left the sepals, ovary, and style attached. Cutting off the pedicels to two cm long, we planted about fifty pedicles.



Since we were not certain that this method would work for us, we used flower stems for the propagation of chimeras too, which we knew worked perfectly.

We used six cm. pots, with five pedicles in each. The planting medium was 1-1-1 peat moss, vermiculite, and perlite, sieved by a five millimeter seive and moistened. To ensure that the sepals and pedicels will not lose moisture before they root, we put the pots in a closed, transparent container under lights on a stand for twelve hours a day. After forty-five days of planting it was so exciting when the first sign of a new baby plant was seen.

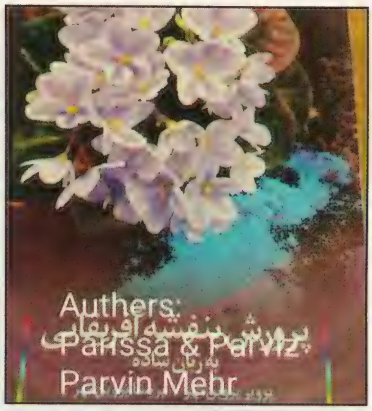
After 3.5 months, more and more babies were coming out of the medium, and recently we were planting each baby in a 6cm. pot after they had been acclimated to the outside conditions. Humidity in the planting salons is fluctuating between 60-70% at present, and the plants are in good condition and therefore the first step of propagating by pedicels is successfully completed.

The second part is whether the baby plants will produce pinwheel flowers, true to type, or not? I will report on this step in the near future. Should this

method work, much more new chimera plants can be produced from a single mother plant, at least compared with using peduncles **only**.

I would like to thank Ruth Coulson for her efforts to first open this window.

Introducing ourselves: Parissa Greenhouses was established in 1994. At present, we have two planting salons producing some 20,000 plants of African violets and their relative plants per year. We use artificial light. Miss Parissa, my daughter, who is my right hand, is a Commercial Member of AVSA, and we both are authors of a 164 page book called *"How to Grow African Violets Easily"*.



"FLORIDA: GATEWAY TO THE TROPICS" AND HOME OF THE 2017 AVSA CONVENTION

Are you ready to join us in Orlando, "The City Beautiful," for the 71st AVSA Annual Convention & Show, in 2017? You will pass through the many gateways offering you botanical delights, fantastic adventures, and delicious international cuisines.

The first "Gateway" will take you to the Wyndham Orlando Resort through lush South Florida foliage set among sparkling lakes. Gardens and romantic lagoons fill the resort's landscape. To the east is the gateway to the Kennedy Space Center. To the west, lies the gateway to world-famous resorts and entertainment centers: Walt Disney World, Universal, and SeaWorld, with complimentary shuttle from the hotel. To the north, a gateway opens to Apopka, known as the "Indoor Foliage Capital of the World," whose nurseries supply the African violets that many of our Florida clubs use for their shows and sales.

LAKE EOLA, ORLANDO
Courtesy of Jillian Cain Photography

Travel through the city and enjoy the gardens that decorate entrances to neighborhoods and shopping malls. Visit Leu Gardens, minutes from downtown Orlando, with fifty acres of botanical gardens and historic buildings.

Your host organization, The African Violet Council of Florida, is preparing a magnificent show in which Florida members, and AVSA Members from other parts of the country will showcase their spectacular plants and designs.

Vendors will display an array of African violets and other Gesneriads at their sales tables. **Mark your calendars now for the week of May 28th to June 4th.** More information will be available in future issues of the *African Violet Magazine* and on the AVSA website.

Your host organization, The African Violet Council of Florida, is preparing an exceptional convention, with a magnificent show. Vendors will offer an amazing array of African violets and Gesneriads at the Sales Tables. Mark your calendars now for the week of May 28th to June 4th to explore Florida: *Gateway to The Tropics*." More information in upcoming issues of the *African Violet Magazine* and the AVSA website.

Ness' Mini Sota

Exhibited by:
Kathy Lahti
Hybridized by:
D. Ness
Seminiature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Primulina dryas lattifolia

Exhibited by:
Richard Nicholas

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Amethyst

Exhibited by: *Judith Carter*

Hybridized by: *Armacost & Royston*

Standard

Contest Entry

Those Blasted Ballasts!

By Carolee Carter

A few months ago, Neil Lipson visited Ocala, Florida, to speak to our African violet club. While he was here, he wanted to see my collection, and how could I refuse? I have two large stands, one small stand and a few other "rigged" shelves that contain all the baby plants I share on our club's raffle table.

The first thing he noticed (other than how lovely *most* of my plants were!) was that some of the fluorescent light fixtures in the large stands emitted less light onto the plants than others. I had noticed that too, and I told him that I thought it was the light lamps and had changed them several times with little difference. It was very frustrating. Neil suspected that it was the ballasts.

As part of his talk to our club, he had brought along his Digital Lux Meter, and he took a reading of the lumens at the top the plants under those lights. Wow! Was I surprised at the difference from one shelf to another. The lowest reading on those dimly lit shelves was about 185 foot-candles, while a couple of brighter shelves read 325. He immediately knew that something was wrong and suspected that the 20+ year old ballasts were worn out. Normally ballasts just die, but in this case they were fading away which is not a common occurrence.

I knew each of those 4-foot fixtures contained a ballast, but the ballasts I was familiar with from the "old days" were the round fluorescent "starters" that you inserted into the fixture from the underside without any fuss. Neil suggested that we take a quick trip to the local home improvement store, purchase two and replace them in the two fixtures that emitted the dimmest light. I had checked with the manufacturer of my stand, and to replace the entire fixture would have cost over $100. So, this alternative was definitely worth trying.

There were two types of ballasts available for my T12 fixtures: one was for a two-lamp commercial fixture; the other for two-lamp residential use. He explained that the newer ballasts were electronic which were more energy efficient and also were able to run one lamp by itself without the second lamp in the fixture if I wanted to operate it like this, or if one of the lamps burned out while I was out of town.

I would have never attempted this chore by myself. My stepson is a master electrician, and my grandson is a journeyman, but they live in Maryland! I could have asked a neighbor to help, but while I was pondering this alternative, Neil already had the fixture out of the stand and into my workshop!

The second hurdle to be crossed was discovering that the cover of the ballasts was secured by RIVETS! So the exercise wasn't going to be as easy as unscrewing a bolt. We had to use a drill. My drill was over fifty years old (you can tell how enthusiastic I am about home repairs!). It took a lot of –effort to drill through those rivets to expose the ballast. (I have since purchased a new drill!)

I watched Neil unwind and cut all the wires (and there were a LOT), taking notes for each step and where each wire was attached (red to red, blue to blue, etc.) and watched him reattach and secure the new ballast. And then it was time for the test before he closed the cover. I crossed my fingers. It worked, and wow was the light bright!

Neil later said that he had never heard of a ballast fading away like that. These stands were purchased around 1990, so apparently it was a surprise that they didn't last longer than twenty-five years.

When we returned the fixture to the light stand and secured it, I again tested the foot-candle output, and it read 425. Quite a big difference! The plants that were under those lights were not growing well, but now they had a much better chance. Neil warned me about a culture shock by the sudden increase in light, and I knew that was something to consider.

After Neil left, I decided to bite the bullet after testing the output of four other fixtures and was

happy to say that these were *not* secured by rivets but by regular screws. I had my notes in front of me, and it took about twenty minutes to remove the old and install the new ballast. I now have stands with lights that are doing what they are supposed to do!

How may foot-candles do African violets require? Research reveals 800 -1,000. However, that is for growing with only six hours of light (which would be similar to growing by a window with strong (not direct) light. Most of us who grow on stands have those lights on for 8-10 hours, and more if growing for a show.

So, I definitely suggest that if you grow under fluorescent lights, invest in a good Digital Lux Meter (mine is a HDE LX-1010B from Amazon and was less than $20) and check your fixtures' output. (LUX meters are less expensive than foot-candle meters, which can cost up to $700!) To convert the reading on the LUX meter to foot-candles, multiply the reading by .093. ***Take note:*** this particular LUX meter has different settings, so look carefully on the display to ensure it's set on the 20,000 mark (at the bottom of the screen it says in small print "x10"). Then bravely forge ahead and replace the ballast if you need to. It's a piece of cake – unless there are rivets!

For those of you who want more technical advice, Neil has added these thoughts:

> "When you install the new ballast, make sure it makes good contact to the metal backing of the light fixture, which will act as a heat sink to keep it cool. I have seen ballasts that sit on the shelf and fail after some years, so you should always have a back-up ballast. If possible, see if your local home improvement stores, or Amazon, has the 'commercial' or heavy-duty electronic ballast, which will really last a long time. It also never hurts to have an extra fluorescent socket in case you crack one when you install the lamps. To make your life easy, before you install the lamps, give each side a quick spray of WD-40, and wipe off the glass, but leave the contact 'wet'. Also spray the contact points on the fixture itself. That will make the installation and removal much easier."

Final thought, and tip of the day: Spraying WD-40™ on the contact points was a revelation to me! How many times have I struggled to remove a fluorescent lamp, hoping that I wouldn't break one of the contacts or the lamp itself? I have since sprayed every one of those contact points in all of my stands, and the lamps now easily slip out with no struggle.

Streptocarpus 'D's Imp'

Exhibited by: *Donna Turner*

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

African Violet Society of America

June 2, 2016 - Albuquerque, NM

"Violets Color the Land of Enchantment"

Amateur Horticulture Division

Best African Violet in Show - *S. 5c2 clone diplotricha Parker*

Won by: William Price from Vancouver, BC

2nd Best African Violet in Show -*Buckeye Nostalgia*

Won by: Kurt Jablonski from Miami Beach, FL

3rd Best African Violet in Show - *Rob's Inner Orbit*

Won by: Mary Corondan from McKinney, TX

Best AVSA Standard Collection - *Bisque Risqué, Optimara New Mexico, Granger's Fantasy Lace*

Won by: Stephen Covolo from Springville, CA

2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection - *The Alps, Ma's King Carnival, Rhapsodie Rosalie*

Won by: Mary Corondan from McKinney, TX

Best AVSA Mini/Semimini Collection - *Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Jersey Sugar Plums, Eternal Orbit*

Won by: Anne Nicholas from Denton, TX

2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semimini Collection - *Jolly Waltz, Jolly Lilac, Jolly Orchid*

Won by: Debbie McInnis from Floyds Knobs, IN

Best AVSA Species Collection - *S. 5f clone orbicularis, S. brevipilosa, S. 8 clone Cha Simba*

Won by: Candace Baldwin from Phoenix, AZ

2nd Best AVSA Species Collection - *S. 5a clone grandifolia No. 237, S. 5b clone confusa Mather E, S. 8 clone rupicola*

Won by: Terry Richey from Vail, AZ

Best Holtkamp Collection - *Optimara Little Creek, Optimara Little Blackfoot, Optimara Little Maya*

Won by: Debbie McInnis from Floyds Knobs, IN

2nd Best Holtkamp Collection - *Optimara Little Crystal, Optimara Little Pearl, Optimara Little Ruby*

Won by: Kathy Lahti from Annandale, MN

3rd Best Holtkamp Collection - *Optimara Little Amethyst, Optimara Little Ruby, Optimara Little Turquoise*

Won by: Sandra Skalski from Mullica Hill, NJ

Best Robinson Collection - *Rob's Fuzzy Navel, Rob's Delicious, Rob's Scrumptious*

Won by: Anne Nicholas from Denton, TX

Best Buckeye Collection - *Buckeye Nostalgia, Buckeye Claret Wine, Buckeye Main Event*

Won by: Kurt Jablonski from Miami Beach, FL

Best Standard African Violet, *Buckeye Nostalgia*

Won by: Kurt Jablonski from Miami Beach, FL

Best Miniature African Violet, *Rob's Chilly Willy*

Won by: Anne Nicholas from Denton, TX

Best Semiminiature African Violet - *Rob's Inner Orbit*

Won by: Mary Corondan from McKinney, TX

Best Trailer - *Senk's Fruit Fly*

Won by: Mary Corondan from McKinney, TX

Best Species African Violet - *S. 5c2 clone diplotricha Parker*

Won by: William Price from Vancouver, BC

Best New Cultivar – Amateur - *Sport of 'Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion'*

Won by: Terri Post from Sioux City, IA

Best Vintage African Violet, *Milang Skies*

Won by: Terri Post from Sioux City, IA

Best Other Gesneriad - *Primulina yungfuensis*

Won by: William Price from Vancouver, BC

2nd Best Other Gesneriad - *Primulina dryas lattifolia*

Won by: Richard Nicholas from Denton, TX

Best The Alps - *The Alps*

Won by: Mary Corondan from McKinney, TX

Best Jersey Snowflakes - *Jersey Snow Flakes*

Won by: Richard Nicholas from Denton, TX

Best Buckeye Nostalgia - *Buckeye Nostalgia*

Won by: Kurt Jablonski from Miami Beach, FL

Best Chimera - *The Alps*

Won by: Mary Corondan from McKinney, TX

Horticulture Sweepstakes - 41 blue ribbons

Won by: Anne Nicholas from Denton, TX

Runner-Up to Horticulture Sweepstakes - 36 blue ribbons

Won by: Mary Corondan from McKinney, TX

Best 'Persian Prince'

Won by: Judy Carter, Broken Arrow, OK

Design Division

Best Design in Show - *"Sandia Peak Tramway"*
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE
2nd Best Design in Show - *"Terrarium - 24 inches or less"*
Won by: Suzanne Roberts from Dallas, TX
3rd Best Design in Show - *"The Rio Grande River"*
Won by: Judith Carter from Broken Arrow, OK
Design Sweepstakes - 10 blue ribbons
Won by: Danny Tidwell from Beebe, AR
Runner-Up to Design Sweepstakes - 6 blue ribbons
Won by: Linda Hall from Ravenwood, MO

Commercial Division

Best African Violet on Display Table – *Windsome*
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE
Best African Violet in Show – Commercial - *K's Slingshot*
Won by: Kathy Hajner from Peralta, NM
2nd Best African Violet in Show – Commercial - *K's Tipsy Spritzer*
Won by: Kathy Hajner from Peralta, NM
3rd Best African Violet in Show – Commercial - *Cajun's Coujon*
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE
Best AVSA Standard Collection – Commercial - *Cajun's Coujon, Cajun's Zydeco, Jersey Snow Drops*
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE
2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection – Commercial - *Santee Sioux, Tatanka, Smooch Me*
Won by: Kent Stork from Fremont, NE
Best AVSA Mini/Semimini Collection – Commercial - *Rob's Gum Bubble, Jolly Ace, Windsome*
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE
Best AVSA Species Collection – Commercial - *S. 5a clone grandifolia No. 237, S. 5b clone confuse, S. 5c1 clone ionantha*
Won by: Jo Anne Schrimsher from Victoria, TX
Best Holtkamp Collection – Commercial - *Optimara Chagall, Optimara Kentucky, Rhapsodie Patricia*
Won by: Kent Stork from Fremont, NE
Best Other Gesneriad – Commercial - *Streptocarpus 'Falling Stars'*
Won by: Donna Turner from Southgate, MI
Best New Cultivar – Commercial - *K's Salsarita*
Won by: Kathy Hajner from Peralta, NM
2nd Best New Cultivar – Commercial - *K's Pink Agate*
Won by: Kathy Hajner from Peralta, NM
3rd Best New Cultivar – Commercial - *K's Slingshot*
Won by: Kathy Hajner from Peralta, NM
Best Horticulture Showcase – Horticulture
Won by: Kathy Hajner from Peralta, NM
2nd Best Horticulture Showcase – Horticulture
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE
Best Artistic Showcase - Artistic
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE
2nd Best Artistic Showcase – Artistic
Won by: Donna Turner from Southgate, MI
Best Commercial Display Table
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE
Commercial Horticulture Sweepstakes - 25 blue ribbons
Won by: Kathy Hajner from Peralta, NM
Runner-Up to Commercial Horticulture Sweepstakes - 13 blue ribbons
Won by: B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE

Contest Entry

REPOTTING: A COMBAT SPORT

By Sandi Mynatt

It was the first day of spring, the sun was shining and I arose early, eager to start my first foray into repotting my newly acquired violets. After doing much research I had 'list-in-hand' of what to purchase at the local garden center and was full of confidence that this would be a very rewarding venture. At the garden center I purchased several large bags of potting mix, perlite and vermiculite..(the special colossal size that is slightly larger than a grain of sand, I might add). I had previously ordered a plethora of pots from e bay and they stood clean and ready for my use. Getting the soil into my van was no issue at all, since the nice young man placed them in there with little effort. When I got them home, apparently something magical had occurred on the way....they tripled in weight. I could barely drag one of them to the tailgate, and lifting it was completely out of the question. This posed somewhat of a dilemma to me, but not to be undone by a simple problem of physics, I enlisted the help of my hand truck...after dragging out the air compressor to fill both flat tires. Admittedly, I was a little irritable at that delay, but managed to overcome it with dreams of newly potted violets standing in neat soldier rows on my new lighted stand. When I went to pour the various bags into a large trash can which I had decided to use for my mixing barrel, I realized that handling it was like trying to wrestle a very large, dead pig in a sack up and over the edge of the can. By this time my enthusiasm was waning just a wee bit and I took a short break to have a sandwich. Food always brightens my outlook.

It was a windy day and I was enjoying the refreshing breeze out on my deck until I poured the perlite into the bucket. A wayward gust blew a handful of it right into my face. Yes, I had my mouth open in shocked surprise at the time. Yes, it's very crunchy, but I doubt the nutritional value is anything to write home about. My eyes were much smarter than my mouth. They closed a millisecond before the perlite particles reached them. It was about this point where I realized that a significant portion of the perlite had found it's way down my shirt and into my underwear. Now that is an experience I do not recommend. I did glance around for onlookers before I stripped to the waist to remove the abrasive offenders from my clothing. Some of these sandpaper covered mini boulders were clinging to the fabric with a death grip that required removal by hand, one at a time. I never knew that perlite was the original forerunner of velcro.

Considering the amount of potting mix I was combining, I was not certain how best to mix it evenly. So I hit upon the idea of closing the lid of the trash can and rolling it on the deck back and forth to combine. I had seen compost bins that did much the same thing and it made perfect sense to me at the time. Expecting the lid to come off, I wisely duct taped it down. Using my foot, I pushed the can to start it rolling. Smugly, I was congratulating myself on my cleverness...until the can reached the first step down. Without warning it rolled down the step, building up speed as it went and took the next five at warp speed as I screamed, "No, come back!" I could not outrun it, nor could I get ahead of it since it took up the entire width of the walkway. All I could do was watch in horror and wonder if it would continue down the steps, onto the dock, and off into the river. Luckily, the handle on the can caught on the last step and it stopped about three feet from the water!

I surveyed the situation. I had no idea how I would get this one-hundred pound can of potting soil back up onto the deck. So I decided to admit partial defeat and just scoop out a bucket full at a time from where it lay at the bottom of the stairs. It seemed a reasonable compromise, considering I was losing valuable time and a lot of patience by this point.

Not to be undone by mere 'dirt', I pressed on-

ward. The first plant or two yielded to my efforts without undue writhing and screaming,' a blessing to be sure. Things were certainly improving and I was picking up speed in my task. I happened to catch a glimpse of a cute little lizard sunning on the deck near my feet. In Florida they are everywhere and peacefully coexist with us, scarfing up bugs and mosquitoes to our benefit. Shortly he was joined by another lizard who was obviously the usurper and determined to have this small piece of real estate to call his own. They postured and circled each other like two sumo wrestlers, flaring their red throat pouches and arching their back ridged scales. All quite amusing until they started chasing each other in earnest. This would not have been a problem except that the 'Chase-ee' decided to run over my foot and up my leg, with the 'Chase-er' in close pursuit. I want to go on record here as saying I am not afraid of these tiny reptiles, but as they circled ever higher toward sacred territory I began to panic. Dirt flew, tools dropped and the last violet will have to be rescued off the roof at a later time, I fear. This time, without looking around for witnesses, I dropped trou' and tried to suppress the scream that was bubbling up from somewhere deep in my psyche.... Even with this spontaneous nudity I could not stop them from their race for the finish line. It took several tense moments to untangle one of them from my hair. The other one, being the smarter of the two, jumped to safety at the last second. I think I heard him laughing as he bolted away.

By this time I was seriously considering removing all of the violets from my home and my life. I try not to make snap decisions in the heat of battle, so I postponed that action for a calmer time and did the only rational thing I could. I opened a bottle of wine, and took it, along with a glass, out to the seat on the dock and called it a day. I remembered one of my favorite sayings. "Never put off until tomorrow what can be put off indefinitely." Works for me.

Cherokee Trail

Exhibited by: *Blanche Renz*
Hybridized by: *L. Ray*
Standard Trailer

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Primulina ophiopogoides

Exhibited by: *Ronald Davidson*

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Jolly Jingle

Exhibited by: *Diane Kaluhiokalani*

Hybridized by: *H. Pittman*

Miniature

"And the winners are ..."

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

AVS OF GREATER TULSA, OK – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: The Alps, Ma's Debutante, Frozen in Time; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rainbow's Quiet Riot, **Carol Rice.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Butterfly, Jolly Wow, Cajun's Lil Sprinkles, **Pat Sutton.** Best Semiminiature: Cool Teen; Best Miniature: Optimara Pink Moonstone; Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea humebutai*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Patricia Daniel.** Best Trailer: Rocky Mountain Trail; Best Design, **Judith Cotton.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Sherri Wallace.** Design Sweepstakes, **Jeanne Cotton.**

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA AVS, CA – Winners: Optimara EverSpecial, Optimara EverPrecious, Optimara EverHarmony; Best Standard: Optimara EverPrecious; Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Jerry Warkentin.** 2nd Best Standard Collection: Smooch Me, Tropical Heat Wave, Ian Minuet; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Tiptop, Heartbreak Kid; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, **Stephen Covolo.** Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug, **William Novickas.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subsp. *grotei*; Best Design, **Lola Sutherland.** Best Gesneriad: *Episcis* 'Silver Skies'; Design Sweepstakes, **Renee Wilson.**

CENTRAL FLORIDA AVS, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Seductress, Harbor Blue, Lucien Croteau; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Seductress; Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail; Best Semiminiature: First Prize; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *velutina* lite; Best Gesneriad: *Seemannia sylvatica* 'Bolivian Sunset'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Elvie Blakely.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Lemon Whip, Ma's Blue Spinner, EK-Nebesnaia Lazur; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid, **Linda Price.**

DALLAS METRO AVS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Rosalie, Ma's King Carnival, Picasso; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Mel, Jolly Jan, Rob's Inner Orbit; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Mel; Best Standard: Ma's King Carnival; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Corondan.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wrangler's El Diablo, Buckeye Nostalgia, Buckeye Sentimental Reasons, **Ken Muzalewski.** Best Miniature: Planet Kid; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Dale's Starry Night', **Margery Anderson-Clive.** Best Trailer: Foster Trail, **Meredith Hall.** Best Design, **Bill Foster.** Design Sweepstakes, **Nadine Tichy.**

DESERT SUN AV & GESNERIAD SOCIETY, AZ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Frozen in Time, Halo's Aglitter, Rebel's Valiant, **Barbara Reith.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Maggie Lee, Optimara Colorado, Cajun's Fair Maiden; Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone Cha Simba, *Saintpaulia* 5f clone *orbicularis*; *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *dificilis;*

Best in Show/Best Standard: Maggie Lee; Best Miniature: Little Bo Peep; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5f clone *orbicularis;* Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Candace Baldwin.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Little Pro, Jolly Memory, Optimara Little Creek; **Marty Anderson.** 2nd Best AVSA Species Collection: *Saintpaulia rupicola, Saintpaulia brevipilosa, Saintpaulia* 5cl clone *tongwensis,* **Allan Reith.** Best Semiminiature: Irish Flirt, **Thelma Heinrich.** Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Susan Anderson.** Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Bonfire', **Dariane Joshin.**

DIXIE AVS, GA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Tea Party, Buckeye Party Streamers, Cajun's Big Bertha; Best AVSA Mini Semi Collection: Jolly Fire, Jersey Lilacs, Cajun's Lil Joy; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Tea Party; Best Trailer: Jersey Girl Trail,

Kurt Jablonski. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Comfort Zone, Ma's Soiree, Wrangler's Spanish Cavalier, **Phyllis King.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Jan, Jolly Andrea, Ness' Crinkle Blue, **Jo Schrimsher.** Best Semiminiature: Rob's Outer Orbit, **Martha Spyridon.** Best Miniature: Knight Magic, **Debbie McInnis;** Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, **Carolee Carter.** Best Gesneriad: *Nematanthus* 'Black Gold', **Robbie McMeel.** Best Design, **Mary Lou Harden.** Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kathy Spissman.** Design Sweepstakes, **Becky McMeel.**

FANTASY AVC, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Picasso, Blue Dragon, Tiger; Best in Show/Best Standard: Picasso; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Thad Scaggs.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Spanish Dancer, Dress Rehearsal, Painted Desert, **Luke Reyer**. Best Semiminiature: Gum Drop, **Sally Scaggs.** Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail; Design Sweepstakes, **Gayle Feins.** Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Thad's Tropical Nights', **Carol Chmiko.** Best Design, **Pat Diebold.**

FIRST AVS OF DENTON, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Mary Craig, The Alps, Picasso; Best Standard: Picasso; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Richard Nicholas.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, Windsome, Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Precious Pink; Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, **Anne Nicholas.** Best Trailer: Fun Trail; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Danny Tidwell.** Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Blue Nile', **Eunice Curry.**

SOUTH COAST AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Mini Papa, Lakeshore Silver, Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Best Standard: Carolina Elegant Affair; Best Miniature: Gleeful Elf; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Prudence Risley'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Leonard Re.** Best Design, Design Sweepstakes, **Jacquie Eisenhut.**

SPRING BRANCH AVS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Ontario II, LiK-Vel'mozha, Cajun's Fair Maiden; Best Miniature: Jolly Bambino; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Rhona Thurman.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Patricia, Optimara Romance, Ma's King Carnival; Best Standard: Quiet Faith, **Gary Thurman.** Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Fireball; Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Design Sweepstakes, **Norma Flynn.** Best Species: *Saintpaulia rupicola*, **Donna Williams.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Heartland's White Gold', **Mary McFarland.** Best Design, **Jane Rexilius.**

TAMPA AVS, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Clementine, Optimara New York, Wrangler's Dixie Celebration; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Wow, Shirl's Blue Eyes, Rob's Dust Storm; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Dust Storm; Best Standard: Wrangler's Winter Hawk; Best Miniature: Jolly Lilac, **Glenn Shelton.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Candy Kisses, Optimara myDelight, Live Wire; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Lou Harden.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Antique Rose, Eternal Orbit, Ness' Mini Sota; Best Trailer: Carousel Pony, **Jim Boyer.**

WICHITA FALLS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Azurite, Everdina, Optimara Little Moonstone; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Cajun's Lil Joy; Best Standard: Rhapsodie Ingrid; Best Miniature: Jolly Lulu; Best Trailer: Aly's Rosy Baby; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Teleri'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Patty Daniel.**

AVSA Society Awards

Marge Savage, Chair
Society Awards Committee, 2016

FLOYD LAWSON CONTINUING SERVICE AWARD

For over twenty-five years he tabulated the Best Varieties List and the Honor Roll of African Violets. The column began long ago, as the "50 Best Varieties List." From his 1997 AVM article, Floyd Lawson listed the first tabulation of the "World's 25 Best African Violets." This list began with 'Irish Flirt' and ended with 'Nortex's Razzmatazz Haven.'

Growers from four continents and eight nations submitted lists which were their favorites. More than 700 growers submitted lists comprising nearly 2,000 cultivars. The Honor Roll was chosen from those that were among the top twenty-five for three consecutive years.

This (1997) was also the first year in which Floyd used electronic mail extensively. He served as a Judge for twenty-four years. He was active in California clubs until four or five years ago, experiencing health issues.

The African Violet Society of America praises Floyd Lawson for his diligence and presents him the Continuing Service Award.

KEVIN W. DEGNER MABEL AND GLENN HUDSON MEMORIAL AWARD

Kevin Degner has a LOYAL following. "He makes everyone feel valuable regardless of their violet experience." Write that one on your heart. I had this same feeling while judging with him.

When his club was founded, May 1981, he was a charter member, and was elected its first President. They kept him on as President until 1995. In 2006 he was re-elected - to this day. In the intervening years, he served in other offices. He stores the niches and the other properties; he arranges for the show rooms; he passes sign-up sheets for programs and refreshments.

He was the first person to learn the computerized entries program in Wisconsin and helped others learn it. Kevin chairs Entries at the local show, the Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs Show, and even at a State Fair. Also a member of the Wisconsin African Violet Judges Council, Kevin is a Master Judge and Teacher. And he is a member of the Society Awards Committee, and is a very valuable member of his local club.

"Kevin is very reliable, honest, and a great leader."

"We look to Kevin as our guide."

"Kevin has played a crucial role in the continued existence and growth of the Oshkosh African Violet Society."

The African Violet Society of America also values Kevin Degner and awards him the Mabel and Glenn Hudson Memorial Award for Excellence in Affiliate Leadership.

LINDA L. HALL ONE-YEAR HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Linda Hall has captured my attention for many years. Fast thinking, fast talking, super knowledgeable about Gesneriads in general. And, she helped tutor me in this position - while she was breezing home along the Missouri highways.

Our Souvenir Booklet, last year, had a letter from Mayor "Sly" James of Kansas City, Missouri, describing us "a group of such committed, passionate individuals." Oh, yes, I believe he had been talking to Linda. For Linda was the 2015 AVSA Convention Chair for "Violets Love KC Jazz, Blues and Barbecue."

Linda has given her life to AVSA and has not quit! You see, she is one of those people who have helped AVSA retain the quality that it has.

The African Violet Society of America appreciates and applauds Linda Hall, and awards her the One-Year Honorary Membership.

MARLENE BUCK
CONTINUING SERVICE AWARD

"Her generosity is extreme. She does nothing half-way. And it's never a small project." Once, Marlene gave the original AVSA species slide program at her home, bringing out each well-grown plant to demonstrate the difference in varieties.

For at least thirty years, Marlene faithfully administered the Boyce Edens Research Fund. She received donations and sent 'thank you' notes to each contributor, regularly sending the Research Committee Chair reports on the amounts received, and her expenses. Marlene received the One-Year Honorary Membership in 1991 and 2005, and has served as a Judge.

Marlene still supports her former Liberty Bell Gesneriad Society in Philadelphia, sending hundreds of Gesneriads to support their events. She was also very active in the Desert Sun African Violet and Gesneriad Society in Phoenix. "She is an inspiration to Desert Sun and is a true treasure to AVSA.".

The African Violet Society of America appreciates the dedication of Marlene Buck and presents her the Continuing Service Award.

NANCY G. HAYES
HALL OF FAME AWARD

When she was very young, her father brought African violets home from Fischer Greenhouses. Her mother taught her how to grow them.

For over fifty years, she has served AVSA. She was Columnist for the AVM "Question Box" for ten years. She is a Master Judge and Teacher, having judged for over forty-five years.

Nancy has chaired the following committees: Nominating, Membership and Promotion, Policies and Procedures, and Convention Manual committees.

She has served as Director, AVSA Treasurer, and AVSA Secretary. She has received the following Society Awards: Meritorious Service (2010); One-Year Honorary Membership (1985); Continuing Service Award (1989); the Distinguished Service Certificate (2001); and the Honorary Life Membership (2004).

When AVSA relocated its office, Nancy took a long trip to Beaumont, Texas, to help with membership records. Her long-standing interest is that AVSA operate in a businesslike manner.

Each year she spends many hours at a labor of love: preparing and presenting slide programs of prior AVSA conventions and peeks at new hybrids.

She is a current member of Windsor AVS, the AVS of Canada and other regional and local affiliates - in which she has served in leadership positions.

Violet Nancy has given her life to AVSA. She has not quit! It is a familiar theme affecting the success of our organization. She is one of those people who have helped AVSA grow and retain its quality. She displays total commitment to AVSA.

The African Violet Society of America is grateful for Nancy Hayes and inducts her into the Hall of Fame for her unique and long-standing impact of the Society.

RANDY DEUTSCH
ONE-YEAR HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

The first time we met, we were standing outside locked showroom doors waiting to retrieve our plants after the Houston Convention. When I carried out 'Lamb's Ears,' a standard trailer, he just had to have some leaves. A friend for almost twenty years, Randy has a love for African violets, professional skills, and a commitment to responsibility.

Elected Director in 2005, Randy served on the Commercial Activities and Publications Committees. In 2006 Randy assumed the position of AVSA Finance Chair without benefit of transition materials and developed, on time, the 2007 budget. During this term of office, Randy recommended and implemented procedures to improve AVSA's financial position.

With this same enthusiasm, Randy served AVSA as 2015 Show Chair of "Violets Love KC Jazz, Blues and Barbeque" in Kansas City, Missouri. He organized the ease of entry and exit of our plants and designs. With jazzy blues playing in the background, the awards table sported a blue and white picnic cloth complete with barbeque tools.

A member of Omaha African Violet and Gesneriad Society, Randy is past president of Missouri Valley African Violet Council. The African Violet Society of America applauds the dedication of Randy Deutsch, and awards him the One-Year Honorary Membership.

JUDITH CARTER
CONTINUING SERVICE AWARD

Judy Carter is expert in creating and in judging Design. She is a Master Judge. She used to live in Texas but moved north to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Once, near the end of a long day, Judy was closing the Show Room door. I needed to handle something quickly, and could see the weariness in her eyes; but Judy stood aside and opened the door a crack to let me in. What kind of person does this?

Judy has been Chair of the AVSA Show Awards Committee, for nine years. We have heard her skillfully name winning plants and distribute cash prizes at each Awards Banquet. We have heard raving reviews of her committee work.

Judy served many years as Advertising Manager of the *African Violet Magazine* and was Show Co-Chair of the 2008 Convention in Tulsa. She belongs to the Greater Tulsa AVSociety.

The African Violet Society of America applauds the tireless faithfulness of Judith Carter and presents her the Continuing Service Award.

MARY CORONDAN
ONE-YEAR HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

I met Mary when she showed 'Louise Constant,' a standard pink star hybridized by Jeanette Domiano. Recently, she has been word-processing like crazy. And there is a special AVSA group who loves it. She is "personable, willing, capable, and responsible."

You really know Mary from her *African Violet Magazine* column. For nineteen years, Mary has typed away: "...And the Winners Are," an exacting responsibility. I have highlighted the "Winners" and have placed them on my "Wish List." The column continues to be a valuable tool, and publicizes affiliates.

Mary is president of the First Nighter AVS of Dallas, Texas. She is the immediate past president of the Lone Star African Violet Council and is your current AVSA Secretary.

The African Violet Society of America appreciates Mary Corondan and awards her the One-Year Honorary Membership.

Planet Kid

Exhibited by: *Mary Corondan*
Hybridized by: *H. Pittman*
Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Morgan's Sweet Patootie

Exhibited by:
Mary Corondan
Hybridized by:
C. Eros
Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

AVSA Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner: Chairman • 12916 Midfield Terrace • St. Louis MO 63146
Building Maintenance Fund 1 February through 31 May, 2016

Thumbprint - Under $25
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Two Tone - $25-$49
Dr. Allan B. Elkowitz
Jan Mittlag
Doreen Hagsan
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Robert Kurzynski
Frankie Pletzer
AVS of Minnesota
Donna Mosher
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Moonlight AVS/Texas
1st Nighter of Dallas
Nancy Braun
1st Nighter AVS of Dallas
In memory of Martha Turner

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What's in a Number?

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Inside most cells of a typical plant or animal is a control center called a nucleus. Within the nucleus is the DNA or genetic material of the cell. Although the amount of DNA within a cell can vary, one thing usually stays the same. This is the number of structures the DNA is organized into, the chromosomes. The number of chromosomes is generally a fixed number for each type of organism. Indeed, organisms that are closely related are expected to have the same number of chromosomes. Differences in chromosome number are usually evidence that two organisms are not closely related together.

The study of the number of chromosomes in African violets or genus *Saintpaulia* goes back over 80 years ago. Techniques were being developed about this time to stain the chromosomes and to get accurate counts on their number. Early attempts were often crude and sometimes later found to be inaccurate. For example, one of the first chromosome counts for African violets was by Sugiura in 1936 who reported the number as 28. However, reports by Wilson (1951) and Ehrlich (1958) clearly established the number as 30. The later investigations also had the advantage of examining more species and cultivars and found the number 30 repeatedly in each case.

Generally speaking, the chromosome number for most organisms is an even number because the chromosomes are found as pairs. The number of different chromosomes that make up an organism, or the base number, is referred to as haploid or single set number. Scientists use a code where the capital letter N represents the haploid number for the organism. For African violets N=15. There are 15 different chromosomes that make up the instruction set of DNA for building an African violet. The diploid (2 set) number for African violets is 2N = 30. It doesn't matter which species or cultivar you examine, the number of chromosomes will nearly always be 2N = 30.

One interesting exception to this rule was a discovery by Wilson (1951) of an African violet that did not have 30 chromosomes. This plant, cultivar 'Blue Amazon' had 60 chromosomes. This was the first documented example in African violets of a common event in plants, the doubling of the chromosome number from diploid (2 sets) to tetraploid (4 sets).

Tetraploids are often highly sought after in horticultural plants. As a group, tetraploids have larger cells, perhaps to accommodate the increased size of the nucleus and higher levels of DNA. Tetraploid plants are frequently larger in size, have larger blooms, and the flowers often have more substance and last longer. A good horticulture example is with daylilies where many cultivars are tetraploids. Higher ploidy levels are known in some plants with hexaploids (6N), octoploids (8N) and decaploids (10N) being common examples. Higher ploidy levels are known for fish and some amphibians and reptiles, but the condition is generally fatal in mammals.

Wilson (1951) noted that 'Blue Amazon' had many of the expected tetraploid expectations of larger size including larger stomata on the leaves. Stomata are the openings on the lower leaf surface that allow the plant to take in carbon dioxide for photosynthesis and release water by transpiration. He hypothesized that stomata size might be a way to more easily detect tetraploids, but noted that cultivar 'Pink Amazon' had larger stomata, but was a diploid with 2N=30. He suggested that comparing pollen size might be another method as tetraploid pollen grains were slightly larger on average than diploid pollen grains.

So why would a plant change from a diploid to a tetraploid? Sometimes environmental stress can cause the cell division process to go wrong. A cell with 60 chromosomes that should have separated

into two cells with 30 chromosomes apiece fails to divide properly and the resulting single cell is left with 60 chromosomes. Accidents do happen.

Tetraploids can also be caused deliberately. Colchicine, a chemical derived from the autumn crocus (*Coichicum autumnale*) or meadow saffron which is used to treat gout interrupts cell division and the separation of chromosomes. The resulting cells will be tetraploid or 4N. Experiments by Nearpass (1957) worked out a method of using a 0.25% colchicine solution on cut petioles of leaf cuttings for 4-6 hours. Some of the plantlets produced from these leaf cuttings were tetraploids, usually identified by their larger size and slower growth. Colchicine is considered toxic and care should be taken in handling the chemical, but new tetraploid cultivars could be produced following this method. Colchicine may be obtained from your local pharmacy, but you may need to get a prescription to purchase this chemical.

The most notable tetraploids of the time were the Supreme series. The DuPont series were also suspected of being tetraploids. Both series were large growing, slow to mature and produced long lasting blooms of intense color. However, the plants were known to be fragile with brittle leaves that broke easily. Both the Supreme and DuPoint series were popular for a number of years, but they seem to have faded from collections and may have gone extinct.

The only tetraploid plants that I am currently aware of are the tetraploid versions of two species. These are *S. velutina* clone Amazon and *S. grotei* clone Amazon. There were reports of a tetraploid *S. ionantha* Amazon in the 1950's but attempts to relocate this plant have failed and it may be extinct.

The reader may have noticed the use of the word "Amazon" with the tetraploid plants including 'Blue Amazon' and the tetraploid species. I have been unable to trace exactly where the term "Amazon" originated. However, given that 'Blue Amazon' was the first documented tetraploid, I speculate that "Amazon" became a possible trade term referring to the tetraploid condition.

So far all of the ploidy examples presented have been even numbers of chromosomes with diploid, tetraploid, hexaploid etc. It is possible for plants to have odd ploidy numbers. In each case, the plant is sexually sterile as the cell division to produce pollen or eggs fails. A plant with three sets of chromosomes (3N) or triploid is known in some seedless fruits such as watermelons and bananas. Triploid African violets could exist and would be relatively easy to produce. Crossing *S. velutina* clone Amazon with a diploid cultivar should result in triploid offspring. The plants should be intermediate in size between the diploid and tetraploid parents. Growth should be close to normal. Reproduction by leaf cuttings would be normal, but it would be impossible to hybridize the plant to an F2 generation because of the odd ploidy number. I am not currently aware of a documented case of a triploid African violet although I suspect they do exist and have not been recognized.

A much more unusual case of odd ploidy number is that reported by Uno et al. (2016). Anthers were placed in tissue culture and the 1N cells that would have normally grown into pollen grains were tricked by the use of hormones to produce a mass of cells known as a callus. Further manipulation of the callus with different hormones caused the cells to organize into tissues and regenerate into plants. The resulting plants were haploid (1N). The plants appear normal, but interestingly, stomata in the leaves are smaller in size in the haploid plant than in diploid plants. The correlation between stomata size and ploidy level noted by Wilson (1951) may be a method to detect changes in different ploidy numbers. It took a minimum of 286 days to produce a haploid plant using the anther culture method.

While sexually sterile, the haploid or 1N plants do have a potential use in hybridizing. Use of colchicine solutions can double the haploid number back to the diploid of 2N=30. The resulting plants would be homozygous for every trait they contain. There would be no hidden recessives in these plants. If two plants created by colchicine treatment of haploids were bred together, the resulting F1 offspring would all be genetically identical. This trick to create uniformity in seeds is often seen in hybrid corn and other commercial crops. A producer of African violets who wanted to grow uniform crops from seed instead of using leaf cuttings could use the colchicine doubled haploid

plants to create their breeding stock. Obviously this would only be useful to the largest commercial growers and producers of African violets, but the idea is sound.

Uno et al. (2016) were successful in producing a number of haploid plants from 'Tomahawk'. This cultivar is heterozygous for some of its traits, including flower color. The resulting offspring varied in flower color and shape. Selecting the best and treating with colchicine to produce homozygous diploid plants would allow a breeder to select for very specific traits. The tissue culture techniques are tedious and best done in a totally sterile environment, but the technique is now on record and could be duplicated by those with sufficient interest and funds.

So in summary, what's in a number? Most of our African violets are diploids with chromosome numbers of 2N = 30. Tetraploids have been documented (4N = 60) but have declined in importance over time. However, a person with access to colchicine and using some simple safety precautions could easily produce a new generation of tetraploid plants. Triploid plants (3N= 45) could also be interesting and easy to create through standard hybridization techniques. Haploid plants (1N = 15) require the highest level of technology to create, but could be very useful in creating homozygous pure plants for large scale commercial crop production. It's all a matter of manipulating the base number of 15 simple chromosomes.

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Carolina Ariosa

Exhibited by:
Kathy Hajner
Hybridized by:
L. Abplanalp
Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Heritage Frolic

Exhibited by: *Susan Shaw*

Hybridized by: *A. E. Adams*

Seminiature

Violets Color the Land of Enchantment: Albuquerque Convention 2016

Debby McInnis and Amy Carruth

Dolores Gibbs and Winston Goretsky

Elaine Niece

Gail Podany and Carol Semrau

Harper Kirchner, youngest attendee and future AV grower.

Maria Frisby

Maureen Pratt and Sharon Shannon

Paul Kroll and Mel Grice

Glenda Williams

Sandia Peak Tram Riders

Table 5

Sara Trice

The Kirchner Family

Shannon Gartner

Extraction and Characterization of Water-soluble Pigments from *Saintpaulia* Flowers: Part 1

By: Thao Le[1], Kody Nguyen1, Tu Nguyen[1], Nathan Tran[1], Natalia Kozlyuk[1], and Rachel W. Martin[1,2]
1. Department of Chemistry and
2. Department of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, UC Irvine

Saintpaulia, which is well known as the 'African violet' is such a popular commercial plant in part because of the great variety of flower colors and shapes. These plants mature quickly and flower easily under artificial light. Those characteristics also make the *Saintpaulia* an excellent model organism for researching plant pigments and the enzymes that produce them. The various purple and pink colors of the African violet come from the water-soluble pigments stored in the large central vacuoles of the epidermal cells in the flowers. These pigments are different types of anthocyanins, many of which have been chemically and structurally well characterized. However, on some flowers, the yellow and ivory pigments, which are proposed to be water-soluble flavonoids, have not been well studied yet. Knowing the chemical structure of this molecule would advance our understanding, and identifying which cultivars produce it in abundance will make it easier for people to hybridize many new attractive flowers.

We are in the process of determining the chemical structures of the yellow and ivory pigments that are unusual, and therefore highly sought after, in African violet cultivars. This article (the first in a series) describes how we isolated the water-soluble yellow pigment, and which cultivar has provided the highest yield so far. The result is surprising – it turns out that it is not possible to tell which flowers contain the most yellow pigment just by looking at them. Instead, it is necessary to extract and separate the pigments.

In order to isolate the pigment of interest, we first perform an organic solvent extraction in order to remove the non-water soluble compounds, such as chlorophyll, proteins, and cell membrane components. We do this by first grinding up the flowers and shaking the resulting paste with two solvents that do not mix (think of the fat layer that rises to the top of the water when making gravy), in this case chloroform and acetone. The chlorophyll, proteins, and cell membrane components dissolve in the chloroform layer, while the anthocyanins and our yellow pigment dissolve in the acetone layer, which we need to keep for further experiments. We use a special piece of glassware called a separatory funnel to carefully put the two layers in separate containers **(Figure 1)**.

Figure 1: Separatory funnel during chloroform / acetone extraction.

Now we still have the problem that the anthocyanins and our yellow pigment are all mixed up in the acetone layer. We separate them by using a chromatography column, which is packed with silica gel. Silica gel is used in little packets to absorb water in products that need to remain dry – here we use its absorbent properties to separate our compounds. If you have ever seen multiple colors separate from ink on a wet piece of paper, this is the same process. Different pigments stick to the

Figure 2: Chromatography column showing the separation of purple and yellow pigments

silica gel more or less depending on their chemical structures when we flow the acetone mixture down the column, allowing us to separate them **(Figure 2)**. The purified pigments are shown in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3: Purified fractions from the silica gel column.

We tried separating the pigments from many African violet cultivars, and found several anthocyanins as well as varying amounts of the yellow compound. However, we were very surprised by the cultivar that produced the most yellow pigment so far: 'Storm's Eye' (Sorano), shown in **Figure 4**. Based on just looking at the flowers, we would not have expected to find any at all - they look purple to our eyes! This may be interesting to hybridizers who are trying to produce brighter-colored yellow African violets – starting with cultivars like this and breeding for reduced purple color might be easier than starting with less colorful yellow ones and breeding for more color. We hope that someone will try it soon and tell us what happens.

Figure 4: Storm's Eye flowers, which unexpectedly contain a good yield of yellow pigment.

OUR MEMBERS HAVE THE BEST IDEAS!

By Kat McNeil

At one of our monthly meetings we had an idea-sharing session. I will be eternally grateful for the tip that Jude Neumann gave.

She had a stack of plastic cups with domed tops. The dome had a hole in the center. They were from McDonalds and had been used for fancy coffee drinks. Jude passed out the stack and said that anyone who wanted them could have them. I took quite a few.

At the meeting we always have a raffle at the end and I won one of the domed cups with potting mix and a violet leaf that had started to sprout babies. I began to realize at that moment that I really had something special in my possession.

When I got home, I took all the containers that I had been given and filled them with potted baby violets. I just dropped the pot, plant and all right into the cup.

I had been suffering from a severe health challenge and my plants had really gone begging. Little did I know that within a few days of setting up the McCafé™ violet tray, I would be having two life-saving surgeries, and spending twelve days in the hospital.

I had gone in to the ER and didn't get back home for nearly two weeks. After I recovered, and when I finally got around to checking out my plants that hadn't even been watered, imagine my surprise to find them all lush green and some even blooming.

The domed cups had become a perfect little hot house and had kept in the moisture and controlled the temperature for almost a whole month without a single bit of help from me.

Now that's what I call a brilliant idea!

Contest Entry

Applying the Brakes

By Bruce Pearson

In a previous article I tell about coming home from my first African violet show with not one but seventy-six plants. This was a little more than two years ago and yes, I have attended several more shows and a convention, each time adding more plants. As you have probably surmised in the last article and these first two sentences, I am an incurable Gemini.

We now have well over 200 varieties, seventeen lighted plant stands, two windowsills three shelves high, three lighted twenty-foot shelves, a twenty-foot container ready to add more plants, along with a 35 x 96 foot greenhouse in the works, specifically for growing Gesneriads and African violets.

Although we have been in the nursery and garden center business for over fifty years, adding violets to the mix at the present rate needs to be examined, and brakes applied, especially since we want to slow down and retire. Yeah, right!

Hope, possibly...as I did come home with only sixty-six plants from the Kansas City convention. Does that show restraint or what? As you can see, I have certainly enjoyed my short time with violets. Unlike the orchids, bromeliads etc., that I have been used to growing all these years, I can see in just a day or two the changes that go on with the African violets' culture.

Thankfully, I have kept a database of the plants I have acquired, but unfortunately have not kept a diary of all the day to day activity and myriad of changes that have occurred in my short time growing violets.

As a result, I have run into some problems that I was at a loss in solving immediately; changing too many things in too short a time, has resulted in too many possibilities to pinpoint the problem. Altering the soil mixture, adding additives to my fertilizer regime, using several different kinds of LED lights and fluorescent lighting, are just a few of the variables that have taken place in a couple of months.

Within just a couple of weeks, several of my plants looked as though they had been sprayed with a broad leaf weed killer. Close observation of the affected plants with a hand microscope, did not disclose any insects. I quickly stopped my trace elements and Superthrive that had been added to my fertilizer regime, and stopped adding 'additives' to my repotting mix. In short, I stopped as many changes that I had made going back to basic soil mix and 1/4 tsp per gallon of 20-20-20.

It seemed to be not a light problem, as it was on several shelves with different types of lights. I looked and looked for insects as I was now seeing physical damage to the plants. And then, I observed movement within the reservoir of one of the plants, and closer observation revealed several other reservoirs with the culprit. I believe it was a thrips, but unlike those observed on orchids. I looked again for these culprits directly on the plants, but came up again with nothing.

Purchasing both Avid and Conserve, I have now made two applications of each over a one month period, and the problem seems to be disappearing. Thrips? Mites? Or something else? I am still not positive, but I suspect it was mites, as the Avid applications seems to have stopped it in its tracks. I also feel the plants were retaining too much water in their wicked situation.

This could have been corrected much more rapidly had I exercised some restraint and isolated my changes (one at a time) to a few plants over a longer period of time.

To me, African violets, although basically simple in their needs, offer the every grower enough challenge to be exciting. They have certainly shown me that whatever is performed on them shows up almost immediately, unlike orchids and bromeliads that can take years to present themselves. Next to the plants themselves, I think a diary of what goes on should be kept. Labeling the plant with a date it was repotted or in some way changed is without doubt most helpful.

I have started keeping records with the calendar on my computer. It would be nice to have a separate system, but I will see how this goes.

No one ever said being a Gemini was easy.

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Storm's Eye

Exhibited by: *Ann Shubert*

Hybridized by: *L. Lyon Greenhouses, P. Sorano*

Standard

The Alps

Grown and Photographed by: *Paris Merriam*
Hybridized by: *K. Horikoshi/H. Sawara*
Standard

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Pat Hancock – Middletown, OH
'Buckeye Main Event' (10812) 02/08/2016 (P. Hancock) Semidouble coral pink ruffled pansy/darker eye. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, plain, glossy, serrated/red back. **Large**

Michael Minzey – Bancroft, MI
'Audrianna Rose' (10813) 03/21/2016 (M. Minzey) Semidouble-double cream and green ruffled pansy/variable lavender shading. **Variegated** medium green and white, heart-shaped, quilted, ruffled. **Standard**

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Contest Entry

Smitten by Variegation

By Janet Sierzega

While you're shaping your African violets for symmetry, retarding bloom by pinching buds to grow larger plants or hold off the blooms for show it would be nice to enjoy the ornamental pleasures that differently colored leaves add to your collection. Variegation is the appearance of differently colored areas in leaves. I have been smitten by their allure.

We all know the importance of chlorophyll in plants to grow and keep your plant healthy. The green portion of the variegated leave has to work hard to support the other colors that do not contribute to photosynthesis. It the green portion of the leaf is dominant while propagating, the leaf will get the new plant off to a good start. As the plant grows, the challenge begins for the grower to ensure the other colors develop and are maintained.

Types of Variegation

Tommie Lou – this type has a white, cream. or pink color around the leaf edge and tends to be quite stable.

Crown Variegation - the transformation of light colored green or yellow leaves at the central core of the crown to green as the outer layer of leaves develop.

Lillian Jarrett or Mosaic – the green part of the leaf is interrupted by other colors in streaks, blotches, marbled or veined patterns.

Temperature and Light Requirements

As with all real estate think location and look carefully at the space allocated for your plants. Variegated plans like it cool. Heat rises so keep the plants low. I grow with natural light and sometimes the plants rest on the floor near the windows. For folks growing under light, let the variegated plants stay at the ends of the fluorescent lights on your stands so the light doesn't create too much heat. Remember they can have the spotlight at the show!

Fertilizer

Excess nitrogen will impair the display of variegation. Keep this in mind when selecting a fertilizer. Read the numbers assigned to the Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K). I use a fertilizer higher in phosphorus, the center number on the NPK label, (12-36-14 or 15-30-15), which seems to help both the leaf variegation and blossom formation. You can keep the 3 numbers balanced for less fuss during plantlet to immature plant stage, when nitrogen is helpful for foliage development. At this stage you would be using the same fertilizer for variegated and non-variegated plants. Then, as the plant gets larger, encourage the variegation with the use of a fertilizer with higher phosphorus.

Leaf Damage

Variegated leaves are more sensitive to damage. You will notice brown spots or brown edges as a result. Less handling of the leaves and keeping leaves from touching neighboring plants are good preventative measures. Leaves touching soggy soil can also destroy leaves. I have used tooth picks to elevate leaves of plantlets balancing the tooth pick across the small pot rim. This has helped the plant to grow bigger without loosing leaves or the plants at an early stage of growth. Protecting leaves at all stages is helpful to growing larger leaves and keeping symmetry since variegated plants tend to grow slower than others.

Culture Break with Season Changes

Culture breaks from Winter to Summer are obvious at a single glance. The heat of Summer will encourage the leaves to turn green unless an effort is made to keep the plant cool. That may require running the air-conditioner when you aren't home and definitely using a fan to circulate air. I have overhead fans that help with both yet do not create a draft. Growing under light may mean

reducing the number of hours the lights are on or having lights on a night when the temperatures are generally lower. Since I grow in natural light I redirect sun by adjusting my blinds and move the variegated plants from a southern to eastern exposure.

Hopefully, you will be encouraged to grow variegated African Violets and become rewarded by a beautiful blooming plant showcased by the symmetry of variegated leaves. In the mean time, do as I do, get inspired by the magnificent photos in AVM.

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Rhapsodie Stephanie

Exhibited by: *Kenneth Rein*

Hybridized by: *Holtkamp*

Standard

Contest Entry

The Advantages of Top Watering, and When to Switch

By Neil Lipson

I have been top watering my violets since I started growing in 1983. However, I never switched to wick or mat watering for a variety of reasons. Many growers ask me about this, so I thought it was about time to write an article on why I continue to use this method for all of my violets.

Learning mat or wick watering can be a little tricky. Too big of a wick and the plants will get too much water, and vice versa. There are advantages, however, *if* you get it right. You can a) fill either a single reservoir for each plant, b) sit each plant on a common mat placed in the bottom of a tray, or c) use a common tray with egg crate grating on top onto which the plants sit with a wick hanging from the pot into the tray of fertilized water. But there are also drawbacks to mat or wick watering.

The first thing you need to do is to reduce the amount of the fertilizer. If you're using 1/4 tsp. per gallon, you may need to cut that in half to 1/8 tsp. The same applies to any insecticide you use when watering the plants, like an Imidacloprid-based solution. In fact, leaving plants with the insecticide solution in the reservoir or onto the mat or grating can cause all types of problems, which means you must treat the plants individually.

The second drawback is that if you use a common mat or grating for all the wicks, all the plants will be limited to one type of fertilizer. Why would this matter? A good example is the variety 'Sugar N' Spice' which needs 5-50-17 to emerge into full bloom, while other violets would use your normal bloom booster such as 15-30-15 or 12-36-14. (As an aside note, many growers do NOT change their fertilizer during shows, but simply increase the fertilizer by around 50% for a few weeks before the show. I personally do this with my 14-12-14 Plant Marvel, as the blooms need the ENTIRE portion of the N-P-K mix (nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium), not just the phosphorus portion of it. That means that during shows, I'll use 1/2 tsp. of 14-12-14 Plant Marvel (my favorite fertilizer) per gallon instead of the 1/4 tsp.) I only do this for the last few weeks before the show.)

If you use a common mat or grating, there is one major drawback, which is the spreading of mealy bugs. However, if you use individual reservoirs for each plant, you can bypass this problem. Sandra Skalski uses a black wick to see them when she lifts the pots off the reservoir, which is a very ingenious solution that I have not heard of before. Other growers, like Carolee Carter, use dark purple. She places the pots on a circle of matting that has a "tail" attached to it, which hangs in the water of the reservoir. That's even easier because when you lift the pot off the reservoir you can clearly see the mealy bugs.

Another problem with wick, or mat watering, is that the height of the reservoirs, or the egg crating on the tray, will raise your plants closer to the lamps in most light stands. Sometimes, you just don't have the luxury of having 10" from the top of the violets to the fixture.

The size and type of the wick makes a big difference. You do have some legroom on choosing these products, and you have to remember to wet the wick to get the process started.

Now, who should use top watering? The new grower who doesn't have the experience of wick, egg crating, or mat watering is the perfect candidate, as well as the African violet researcher who would want to have perfect control of each plant with no restrictions at all.

So, what are the advantages of wick or mat watering? You can fill the wells once every 6-10 days with no worries. You also get a constant

supply of the fertilizer solution without worrying about too much or too little. It is ideal if your collection is bug free and you want minimal maintenance. If you're going on a trip, it can be a real lifesaver.

Adjustments for wick or mat watering may be just too much for the new grower to figure out, so during this "honeymoon" phase, when the grower is learning how to grow their violets, top watering will make things simple until they have a better idea of how to get the plants to grow the way they like.

All photos, and technical advice on the "wick method," provided by Carolee Carter.

The Imp Series

By Jeff Jackson - Hybridizer

I've always had a fascination with genetics and inheritance. I have a basic understanding of Mendelian inheritance and genetics, and the concept of dominant and recessive genes, I find intriguing.

When I was a teenager I bred tropical fish. Later on, I became fascinated with Orchids in university. After a long break, I took up growing plants again.

After searching online, I found a thriving African violet community in Edmonton and became aware of the variety and types of plants available. I found that it was quite easy to grow them under lights in the basement, and the plants bloomed repeatedly rather quickly. From there, that innate sense of asking ***"I wonder what would happen if ..."*** cropped up again, and soon I was researching genetic dominance patterns, cross-pollinating plants, and raising seedlings.

It can take several years to see results from hybridizing orchids. African violet seedlings will usually bloom within the same year, so it almost felt like instant gratification!

I have had two other hybridizers help me out along the way right here in Edmonton. Carlos Beca, hybridizer of the Beca's series, told me his formula for sowing seeds, and it's a recipe I follow to this day. Carol Eros, hybridizer of the Morgan's series, has been an invaluable resource in discussing traits and growth habits, as well as exchanging sources of pollen. Occasionally, we even grow out each other's plants and provide another grower's perspective.

There's also a world of knowledge available online, and I have been very fortunate to have had contact with some very notable hybridizers like, Dale Martens, David Senk, and George McDonald. Learning from others in terms of what works, what doesn't, where they have pushed boundaries and found success, and what failures happened along their journeys, helps to determine where to focus your efforts.

Creating something new has always been my goal. Can you imagine, a non-stop blooming coral puff fantasy, ruffled black wasp, on trailing Tommie-Lou variegated, bustled, longifolia leaf on a micro-miniature plant? I can! Does it exist? Not yet!

It's interesting that there seems to be those hobby growers who are interested in the classics, and I love that, because they preserve the history of where our modern day violet varieties come from. There are also the growers out there who are always looking for the newest variety, something that's different and vanguard; I would fall into this category.

New things peak my interest. I personally love wasp-shaped violets and complex fantasy flowers. If a flower has more than two colors in it, chances are I'm going to love it! Those are the plants I'm interested in creating. Whenever I grow out a batch of seedlings, I'm always looking for blooms that are different, unique, or unusual. Then, I evaluate how the plant grows, and its size. I typically stick to semi-miniatures or miniatures. After that, I grow it for a while to see how it fares. I've had great flowers on really horrid plants ('Imp's Berry Smash' comes to mind. The foliage is unruly but the flowers are awesome).

Until I know that a plant is relatively stable, blooms often and profusely, has a unique flower, grows fairly symmetrically without any assistance and is easy to grow, it won't be registered. I have lots of hybrids that I think are close to that, and a few that I will register soon, but I like to try to put a plant through its paces first before officially registering it.

The stability factor, I think, is the biggest challenge. I don't think hybridizers take enough time to make sure that the plants are stable before releasing them – especially when it comes to the complex fantasy flowers – which are so prone to mutation.

I love the fantasy genre so I chose the name 'Imp' which means small little devil, or sprite, as the alpha name. I thought that was a perfect fantastical name for plants that I find fantastical in nature.

Since wasps are horrid, temperamental, and territorial creatures that sting, my wasp hybrids are almost always named for things that are bad or bad for you: 'Imp's Lil' Deathcap' (Deathcap is a poisonous mushroom), 'Imp's Blue Arsenic' (arsenic is a deadly poison), 'Imp's Jellyfish Sting' – well, you get the idea.

Imp's Little Deathcap

Imp's Kyanite Sparkle

Imp's Karmic Kaleidoscope2

Imp's Fairy Berry

Imp's Fortuitous Fancy

Imp's Jellyfish Sting

I am not sure I can chose a favorite hybrid amongst my creations, but to this day I still love 'Imp's Kyanite Sparkle.' It was one of the first hybrids I created, and it is such a neat little fantasied flower. I totally adore 'Imp's Karmic Kaleidoscope;' the color is more subtle, and it has both puff and streak fantasy in it, as well as almost having a bell shape. 'Imp's Fairy Berry' is loved for its long graceful stalks with tiny bell-flowers, dangling on top like little berries.

If you like something a little different or wild and wonderful, you should grow some Senk varieties. I admire David Senk's hybridizing program, because he's really pushed the limits of the DNA potential within African violets. I especially like 'Senk's The Sorceress' or 'Senk's Anemone'; grow these plants to see what I mean. David's plants are so unusual, and show that he's thinking outside the box. It's almost like he's created a whole new generation of African violets. That's stimulating when you think of the potential of where we can go from there.

I also really enjoy George MacDonald's hybrids. He's done some fantastic breeding that expands the violet color spectrum, with new shades of corals and color overlays; giving us tones like salmon, ruby, stop-sign red, and in my opinion, plants with the closest color to black I've ever seen. 'Dark Night of the Soul' and 'Mac's Black Jack' are two plants I drool over every time they bloom. The flowers are velvety. Long gone are the days of only purple and pink flowers. I think the work George has done will help us reach the orange spectrum. I'm currently working with his plants to see if I can get a nice black wasp. We'll see!

It is so hard to guess what new plants will develop, but I would like to see the yellow color intensify with a really nice banana-yellow flower, over dark foliage. That would be exhilarating. What would be truly fun, is to take some of the wild and crazy plants we have now like 'Botanica,' or Imp's Billowing Cloak,' (a bell wasp) and see if we can create new flower types. I think it would be possible to create a fully-double flower that is made just out of Wasp horns – I imagine it would look almost like a spider mum.

From ***Chatter***,
Publication of the AVS of Canada

Optimara Little Arapahoe

Exhibited by: *Susan Arano*
Hybridized by: *Holtkamp Seminiature*

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Contest Entry

Western Flower Thrips

By Helen Williams

Thrips Life Cycle

There are five stages to the life cycle of thrips. This is what makes it so difficult to eradicate them. The five stages are egg, nymph, pre-pupa, pupa, and finally adult. The most damaging species of thrips is the Western Flower Thrips as it can carry the INSV virus. It is also extremely common in greenhouse and gardens, and has developed a certain amount of immunity to some chemical remedies. Western flower thrips complete their life cycle, in about ten days when temperatures are warm. The adult inserts the eggs into the leaf tissue, in other words, under the skin, where they are protected. These hatch in about three days. The nymphs (hatchlings) feed on the foliage of the plant for about four-five days. After that, they crawl or drop off the leaves to pupate in the soil. After a short rest of a couple of days pupating the adults emerge and once again start feeding.

Damage to Your Plants

While thrips are attracted to pollen, most of the feeding by both adults and young is on plant tissue – in other words the foliage. Thrips have rasping mouths which scrape the tissue so the plant fluids can be sucked up. Often you can see the results of the feeding on the leaves of the plant which can look like stippling or sometimes grey silvery scratch marks. Large populations of thrips cause serious plant injury, which results in a silvery or scratchy appearance on leaf surfaces. Thrips will also feed on flowers, causing browning.

Remedies

Blooms, buds and pollen sacs are only one small part of a thrips diet, and so disbudding will not cure your problem. The miticide AVID is good against many thrips – but it is not effective against the Western Flower Thrips which is the carrier of the virus INSV. Conserve SC is effective against WFT, and it is a systemic, meaning the plant become toxic for some time to any insect that tries to feed on it. This includes thrips, as well as certain other pests like aphids for example. It is still important to disbud because pesticides do not translocate into blooms/buds, so if you leave the blooms and buds you are leaving a food source available that can sustain the population until new foliage appears.

Checking for Thrips

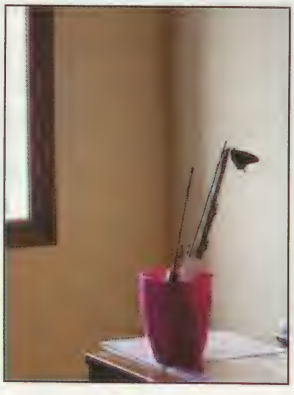
If you suspect thrips, here is an interesting way of checking... Place your plant into a closed plastic bag – blow into it for extra humidity and leave it for several days. You want the leaves to become quite damp, even wet. When you remove the plant from the bag, immediately take it to a strong light and check it using your magnifying loupe. If you find tiny squirming things crawling on the leaves – these are the thrips that hatched while in the bag. They will be out in the open because of the lovely moist conditions you have given them. I suggest you take your plant to the kitchen sink and give it a good spray with fairly hot water to wash them away. It won't cure the problem but at least you will rid yourself of that group. This is a good way to check for mites too, I might add. All these creatures love damp conditions and will come out into the open to enjoy it.

Butterflies...and Violets

By Penny Diffey

It all started innocently enough, chatting with friends and asking what's new at your place. Their reply surprised me. They were enjoying a swallowtail butterfly flying around in their living room. Well, okay, things have a way of getting into your house that you never intended. But this! It was February on the cold Canadian prairies with three feet of snow and -30° temperatures. I had to ask, "How on earth did you get a butterfly in your house?" Apparently the kids may have forgotten to

put the lid on the pail back in the summer and sometime in the fall there was a chrysalis found in their bookcase. They were a home-schooling family, and one of their summer projects was to collect caterpillars, bring them in before the hungry birds could eat them and watch the cycle of the caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly. Happily, the butterflies returned to their garden to lay eggs on the dill and parsley and so the cycle began again.



When spring came I decided to be brave and try this project myself. I wanted to see the change of the little caterpillar to large, with all the colors that showed up on them as they grew. I encouraged my neighbors to plant dill and parsley in their flowerbeds and gardens.

Pretty soon, I was getting calls that a swallowtail was making the rounds, gently stopping here and there to lay eggs and then continuing on. Sure enough the caterpillars followed and they found their way to my house. Some brave grandmas decided the grandkids would love to see this so they started their caterpillar houses too. There was chatter up and down the street, sharing the news.

Phone calls soon followed about a butterfly that hatched and who was free to come see the maiden voyage of the "flower with wings?" It was all smiles as a group of neighbors gathered to watch a first flight. Some applause was had, then with a wave, returned home.

That first summer was a while back but it's still a springtime event to see those chrysalises on a stick from the summer before, which weathered the bone chilling temperatures in the garage, to warm in my spare room along side the African violets, and appear as a new creation.

The wings uncurl slowly and firm up. When they are ready the window is opened, the screen is removed and the butterflies find their way out, seeking new adventures. Things to do, places to see, and maybe in some time return to the parsley and dill in my flowerbed. I'll be watching for them.

Private Dancer

Exhibited by: *Neil Lipson*
Hybridized by: *S. Sorano*
Large

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Cajun's Ethereal Fairy

Exhibited by: *Richard Nicholas*

Hybridized by: *B. Thibodeaux*

Standard

CARE OF PLANTS IN HOT WEATHER

By Heather Harkness

In extremely hot weather our plants can suffer irreversible damage. A couple of years ago, while I was on holiday in New Zealand, Melbourne sweltered in a heat wave with temperatures over forty degrees C. (104°F) for a week or more.

When I returned home, I found that my violets had literally cooked and melted in their pots. Outside, plants in hanging baskets had burned. It was a disaster and it has taken me over a year to get both my indoor and outdoor collections back to something of the standard they were at two years ago.

A few precautions can save a lot of heartache. If plants are grown indoors under artificial lights, turn the lights off and keep the room as cool as possible. However, do not allow cold air from fans or air-conditioning to blow directly on to the plants. (I have the lights on at night all year round, as in the summer, it is cooler for the plants during the day and, in the winter, it is warmer during the night because of the heat from the lights. I do turn the lights off during really hot nights.)

Make sure that reservoirs and water wells are full and that wicks are working. Water twice a day if necessary and do not fertilize in hot weather.

Mist the plants inside with a spray bottle. I have sometimes put containers of water on the shelves amongst the pots to raise humidity levels and I have heard of someone hanging wet towels in the room with a fan blowing on them. Do not re-pot any plants or prick out seedlings. They will struggle to survive in hot conditions.

Outdoors, move plants into a shady and sheltered area. Use shade cloth to give extra protection, and water twice a day or more often if necessary. If plants are growing in a shade house or green house with a concrete floor or similar medium on the ground, keep the floor area wet. This helps to raise the humidity. If there is a run of hot days, put hanging baskets on the floor. Spray with the nozzle of the hose turned to the mist setting. An extra layer of shade cloth might help. Close the doors of the greenhouse against a hot wind.

Plants such as *Streptocarpus* can be watered with the hose if grown outdoors. Plants, and even flowers, can survive hot days, but they may need to be watered several times a day during very hot weather. Shade cloth suspended over the hooks of hanging baskets is yet another way you may be able to give your plants protection from extreme heat.

From the *Newsletter* of the
Early Morn AV Group, Inc., Australia

Morgan's Declan Duff

Exhibited by: *Erika Geimonen*
Hybridized by: *C. Eros*
Miniature

Photo Credit: **Erika Geimonen**

Contest Entry

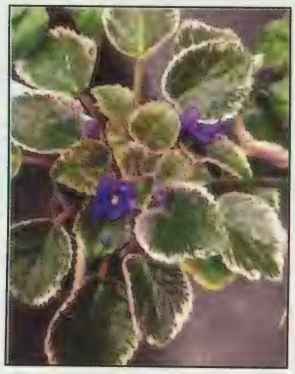
Grafting African Violets

By Josh Burns

After working with African violets for three years, I wanted to do something different, something that had either failed many times, or was never tried before. This was a challenge I took on this year, for grafting African violets is a technique that has failed time and time again. After browsing for ideas for a long time I came to a standstill.

I went to my science teacher for help, telling him what I wanted to do. He is the one who suggested that I try grafting. Not knowing what grafting was, lead me to do research. (A brief synopsis of grafting is taking a leaf or branch from one plant or tree and attaching it to another. This is how we get those weird hybrid fruits like a clementine.)

From there I found that grafting African violets was a poor way to create hybrid violets and the success rate was very low. Still, I set off on my journey to graft.



I selected five African violets from my collection, and chose different variants based on what made them different. I chose those based on the flower shapes and colors, leaf shape and color, and leaf texture. I then numbered each pot, and each plant had a unique number (numbers were randomly assigned) so I knew which graft went to the host plant. Each plant would take graft from another plant, in the order of Plant One would give a graft to Plant Five and Plant Five would give a graft to Plant Four, and so on. After three trials, using a similar technique to the one found on *grownotes.com*, I had one successful graft between plants One and Five. I attached the graft using plumbers' tape because it would not damage the plant, unlike normal tape.

Plant Five was the host of the graft from Plant One. Plant One was an Optimara plant known as 'My Temptation,' and Plant Five was 'Modesty,' which was another Optimara African violet.

After one and a half months I started seeing changes in the plant. The leaves turned a very light pink, while the flowers turned a darkish shade of purple that popped out more, compared to the original violet. I used this experiment for a Science Fair and was very successful, getting Third Place at the State Science Fair in the Plant category for the state of New Mexico. I am currently working on replicating this graft again and plan to do genetic tests if successful, to see what has changed during the transformation.

POTTING METHODS

By Sue Gardner

From the *Newsletter of the Early Morn African Violet Group*, Australia

There are two main methods of re-potting an African violet. The first method involves removing most of the old potting mix and maybe trimming the roots a little. The second is called "mold potting" and merely transfers the complete contents of the old pot in to a new pot and topping up the potting mix.

Let's compare the benefits and drawbacks of each method. First, we need to answer to the following question.

Why do we re-pot an African violet?

There are several reasons why we re-pot.

1. The plant has become too large for the pot.
2. The roots are pot-bound.
3. The pH of the potting mix has become too acid (usually) or too alkaline.
4. The plant has developed a neck.
5. The plant is not growing well.
6. There is a buildup of fertilizer salts often collecting on the top of the potting mix.
7. Small plantlets need transferring to a new pot.

Which potting method is best in the above circumstances?

If the plant is **too large for the pot**, we need to choose a larger pot and therefore add more potting mix. If we want to remove some of the old potting mix, do this by teasing out the roots. Then we can pot up into a larger pot. If it is not long before a show and we want to disturb the plant as little as possible, mold potting is ideal. Carefully remove the plant from the pot and place the root ball into a hole made in potting mix in a larger pot. This will be easy if the roots are pot bound.

If a plant has been in its old pot for many months, the **pH of the potting mix may have become acidic**. An African violet needs to have a potting mix with a pH of about 6.5 to be able to thrive. If we do not replace a good amount of the old mix, the acidity will not be corrected. So in this case, mould potting has its drawbacks. Sometimes the mix may become alkaline from alkaline water. In that case it is also best to replace the potting mix.

If your plant has developed **a neck**, you will need to cut off some of the root ball and pot the plant down. This will mean the removal of most of the old potting mix and the plant will enjoy the new mix. Mold potting is not an option.

Often when a **plant is not growing well** there is a problem with the potting mix. In that case it would be best to remove most of the mix and replace it with fresh potting mix. Mold potting may not help rejuvenate the plant.

When there is a **buildup of fertilizer salts**, as much of the potting mix should be removed as possible. If you use the mold potting method, you will leave all the salts in the pot to do damage.

In the case of **small plantlets**, if they have been in potting mix for a short time, mold potting may disturb the roots minimally and be beneficial. If however they are being removed from a mother leaf, the potting mix will probably be at least 3-4 months old. It will be best to remove most of the old mix.

What do we conclude?

Mold potting has limited uses. In most cases it is best to remove as much of the old potting mix as you can and give your plant fresh mix in which to grow.

Society Awards Committee Needs Your Nominees

By Susan Hill - Awards Chairman

First, I would like to thank **Marge Savage** for her eight years of service as Awards Committee Chair. It is a privilege to be asked to serve as the next Awards Chairman. I really appreciate all the previous committee members who have responded "yes" to remain on the committee as well as those who have been added.

Each year at this time, AVSA members are asked to nominate individuals who are dedicated volunteers who generously give of themselves to promote their clubs and AVSA. Please contact me or any of our Society Awards Committee members about your nominee. You may copy and email the nomination form found on the website or I would be happy to mail you the form.

We rely on you, our members, to let us know of deserving nominees, including descriptions of their accomplishments for AVSA Society Awards. I must receive them by **November 1, 2016** for the 2017 AVSA Convention in Orlando, Florida. Your nomination is valid for three years after which you may re-nominate the nominee. The Society Awards Committee (13) and the Executive Committee (6) will determine the recipients of these awards. The following is a brief description of each of the Society Awards:

Hudson Memorial Award: Provided by the Mabel and Glenn Hudson Memorial Fund (not AVSA) for excellence in affiliate (club) leadership. Affiliate secretaries (and other experienced officers) need to submit names and activities for outstanding leaders of clubs, affiliated with AVSA.

Meritorious Service Award: Awarded to individuals for some special service to AVSA (a certificate).

Honorary One-Year Membership: Awarded for outstanding contributions to AVSA. Required for most other recognition awards (a certificate plus one-year membership).

Continuing Service Award: Awarded for continued outstanding service to AVSA (a certificate). Nominee must first have received the Honorary One-Year Membership.

Honorary Life Membership: Always received by the out-going AVSA President. Alternate years, may be awarded to a worthy nominee who has also been a long-time AVSA member (a certificate, a gold pin, an ID card). This is not to be confused with a "Life Membership." (An individual can purchase a "Life Membership." You cannot buy an Honorary Life Membership.)

Distinguished Service Certificate: Awarded as the highest service award that AVSA may bestow (a certificate). Nominee must first have received the Honorary One-Year Membership and have received the Honorary Life Membership.

Bronze Medal for Horticultural - or - Scientific Achievement: AVSA's highest award for both scientific and/or horticultural contributions. The nominee is not required to be an AVSA member (a certificate and a plaque with an AVSA medallion.) The nominee is NOT required to be a HYBRIDIZER, in accordance with the current AVSA Policies and Procedures Manual.

Please remember that **confidentiality** is required. Please do not discuss your nomination with the person you are recommending as a nominee.

Previous recipients of these Society Awards may be found on the website at www.avsa.org under "members."

Our AVSA Society Awards Committee Members (13) are: Doris Brownlie, ONT, Canada; Kevin Degner, WI; Randy Deutsch, SD; Susan Hill, KS; Dolores Gibbs, TX; Mel Grice, OH; Kathy Lahti, MN; Ruth Loomis, AZ; Dr. Bill Price, BC, Canada; Leonard Re, CA; Edna Rourke, CT; Dr. Jeff Smith, IN; Pat Sutton, OK.

Susan Hill, Chair
Society Awards Committee
116 North Grant
Smith Center, KS 66967
(785) 208-0101
skhill@ruraltel.net

Contest Entry

Cultivating a Successful Club

By Vicki Ferguson
Member of the African Violet Society of Dayton (OH)

Not everyone who is an African violet enthusiast is fortunate to belong to a local club. Those that do may not even recognize how very lucky they are to have a nearby opportunity to network. And yet, there may be clubs that struggle to maintain an active membership base. One plea that might be heard, "We need newer and younger members! We can't do it all!"

Membership decline is a concern expressed by many service and special interest groups these days. Even churches! What is the deal? Yes, there are only so many hours in a day. Yes, members are getting older. (That's just one of the side effects of being alive.) And yet, there are groups out there that are gaining and keeping new members. Is it time step back and look at your club with 'newbie eyes?'

One of the first steps in Strategic Planning is to sit down and 'Plot the SWOT.' SWOT stands for **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats. Here are some examples: Strengths - club provides an educational platform, encourages friendships, is outlet for competition and an access to sharing of plants. Weaknesses - aging membership, tradition (inability to accept change), not embracing technology and lack of publicity/visibility. Threats - age of members, availability of members' time, evolving media outlets and other social/community organization involvement. Opportunities - electronic networking and communication, partnering with like-minded gardening groups and outreach to the community.

Oftentimes, when plotting the SWOT, the gorilla in the room turns out to be an aging membership. Even so, at least once the weaknesses and threats are recognized, change and progress can begin to take place.

How effectively does the club turn a visitor into a new member? Once a visitor steps in the door, what is being done to make them feel welcome and return? Having everyone (not just the visitor) sign in and wear a name tag minimizes singling out the shy newcomer. Names and emails provided on the sign-in sheet can be used later to connect with the visitor and encourage them to come again. It is a good idea to buddy up or mentor with the visitor and explain the meeting structure, how the club raffle works or any upcoming events.

How are club meetings, sales and shows publicized? Are there monthly public announcements of meetings? Does the club have a website or Facebook page? If the club is looking for younger members, it should be prepared to look for them where they are: on their devices. Most people these days are strongly connected to social media. These are not the days of a calling committee or postcard reminders. Electronic communications are vital and their importance to the life of the club **cannot** be over emphasized.

Consider having a club website/blogsite. Options for creating a website presence abound and many are free! Consider WordPress, Blogger, Wix, Weebly or Yola platforms just to name a few. The one thing that would be an expense for the club would be the purchase of a dedicated domain name. However, that shouldn't be a deterrent as a 'website' can be run on a blogging platform without the cost of a dedicated domain. Much can be done on Facebook or Instagram (or new platforms yet to be discovered) to further the digital presence of the club.

Emailing the club newsletter, or at least the meeting's minutes, is an inexpensive way to stay connected to club members even when they aren't able to attend a meeting. It is super easy to include your visitors in these e-mailings if their email address was listed on the sign-in sheet. E-communications require no paper or postage and are quickly distributed.

When a visitor takes the next step and becomes a dues-paying member consider rewarding their enthusiasm with a New Member packet (be sure

to include a club roster) and/or "Welcome gift" of a bag of potting mix. Take advantage of their eagerness to learn. It may take some time for them to feel comfortable and reveal their talents and interests. Sticking to the 'That's the way we've always done it' mentality just might smother great and new ideas that come with a refreshed membership base. Who knows? They might just be on to 'the next best thing!'

Keeping a special interest club viable isn't easy. Just like the plants we love, our club also requires constant nurturing and care to ensure successful results. It can be done and, in the end, everyone benefits. Now get out there and GROW!

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

May 30, 2015
Kansas City, Missouri

The Annual meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was called to order by Third Vice President, Sue Ramser, at 3:20 p.m. in Salon AB of the Holiday Inn, Kansas City Airport, Kansas City, Missouri. The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag were led by Dr. Richard Nicholas. Sue Ramser introduced the officers and presented the President, John Carter.

Elmer Godeny, Secretary, reported a quorum was present.

Elmer Godeny, Secretary, read the Standing Rules for the Annual Meeting, and they were adopted. A copy is attached to these minutes.

President Carter appointed Paula Bal, Chair; Susan Hill, and Glenda Williams to approve the 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes. Bob Clark was appointed Time Keeper. Sue Hoffmann, Jeri Anderson, and Mary Lou Harden were appointed Tellers. Jeri Anderson reported the minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting were approved.

Laurene Jones, Resolutions Chair, presented the Courtesy Resolution, which is attached. The Resolution was adopted.

Pat Hancock, Nominating Committee Chair, submitted the following nominees to serve as Directors until the close of the 2018 Annual Meeting: Joe Bruns, Illinois; Debbie McInnis, Ohio; Carol Semrau, Minnesota; Penny Smith-Kerker, Texas; and Candace Baldwin, Arizona. The floor was opened for additional nominations. Elmer Godeny, New Jersey, was nominated from the floor as a Director by Ruth Rumsey. Bob Clark moved that nominations cease. This motion was seconded and passed. Written ballots were submitted to the membership, and the Tellers were retired to count the ballots.

While waiting for the Tellers' report, Laurene Jones read "Lest We Forget", the list of deceased members, which is attached. The following names were added: Dennis Hale from North Carolina, Ann Koopman from Pennsylvania, Ida Bushkuhl from Texas, Dorris Thurston from New Mexico, and Jackie Jones from Iowa.

The following announcements were made. Convention Director Kathy Lahti announced that she has visited Orlando and has bids for three proper-

ties to serve as the site for the 2017 convention. She is searching facilities in New York for the 2018 convention. Winston Goretsky stated the Judges' Handbook will soon be available in an electronic version. A licensing server has been contracted to track owners and subscribers. Elmer Godeny thanked everyone for awards which have already been donated for the 2016 convention. Anne Nicholas asked members to let the Library Committee know of good programs to offer to affiliates.

There was a temporary adjournment during which time Janet Riemer conducted the Open Forum. Janet stated the Tinari Challenge had been met. Candace Baldwin has a suggestion for the next calendar and will talk with Winston Goretsky about it. The current membership is at approximately 3,800. Candace Baldwin asked how many first time convention attendees will be at the installation dinner tonight. Approximately 50 people stood.

The meeting was called to order again by President Carter.

The Tellers returned with their report. Mary Lou Harden stated 111 ballots were submitted, 109 of which were valid. President Carter re-read the Tellers' Report and announced the following were elected as Directors: Joe Bruns, Debbie McInnis, Carol Semrau, Penny Smith-Kerker, and Candace Baldwin.

Sue Ramser moved that the ballots be destroyed. The motion was seconded and passed.

Pat Hancock, Nominating Committee Chair, submitted the following nominees to serve as Officers: President, Winston Goretsky; First Vice President, Dr. Richard Nicholas; Second Vice President, Sue Ramser; Third Vice President, Susan Anderson; Secretary, Mary Corondan; and Treasurer, Edna Rourke. No nominations were received from the floor. The Officers were elected by voice vote.

President Carter announced the Officers and Directors would be installed at the installation banquet that evening.

President Carter recognized the retiring Directors: Jeri Anderson, Janet Castiglione, Patricia Daniel, Sue Hoffmann, and Cindi Nofziger. Also recognized as retiring were Pat Hancock, Nominating Committee Chair; Judy Carter, Convention Awards Chair; Elmer Godeny, Secretary; and Kathy Lahti, Convention Manual Chair. The retiring Officer, Directors, and Committee Chairs were thanked for their service.

Sharon Shannon extended an invitation to attend the 2016 Annual Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Kathy Bell will serve as Show Chair.

President Carter stated The Violet Barn received the annual membership commission by obtaining 61 new members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Corondan

_____

COMMITTEE TO APPROVE

_____

Paula Bal, Chair

_____

Susan Hill

_____

Glenda Williams

SUMMER CARE

By John Gay

Rejuvenating:

If your plant has a neck, or has been in the pot for a couple of years, now is the ideal time to deal with it. With daylight hours much longer and now being the growing time, leaves put down should respond, and providing the leaves are not too old, then babies should appear much quicker than winter time.

As the atmosphere is so dry, now the violets will appreciate misting frequently. If this is not possible then shallow dishes of water between the plants will act quite well.

If you have a Fungus gnat problem, use yellow plastic dishes of water and you will be surprised how many gnats will drown. Sitting your pots on trays of wet gravel is another means of giving your violets humidity.

The African violets need light to flower, but not direct sun on them, flyscreen at windows or a net curtain will be advisable.

Be careful if you have evaporative air conditioning, that your plants don't get too cold.

From the *Newsletter* of the AVS of South Australia, Inc.

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- ❑ Commercial USA ($60)
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- ❑ Affiliate Chapter, all levels, USA ($35)
- ❑ Affiliate Chapter, all levels, Canada ($40)
- ❑ Affiliate Chapter, International other than Canada ($45)
- ❑ Library ($35)
- ❑ Life Member USA ($1,000)
- ❑ Life Member International ($1,500)

Were you encouraged to join AVSA by a particular individual, vendor or group? If so, please enter their name here: _____

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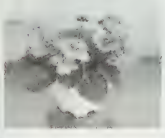

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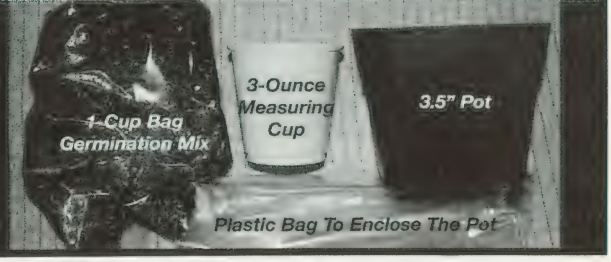

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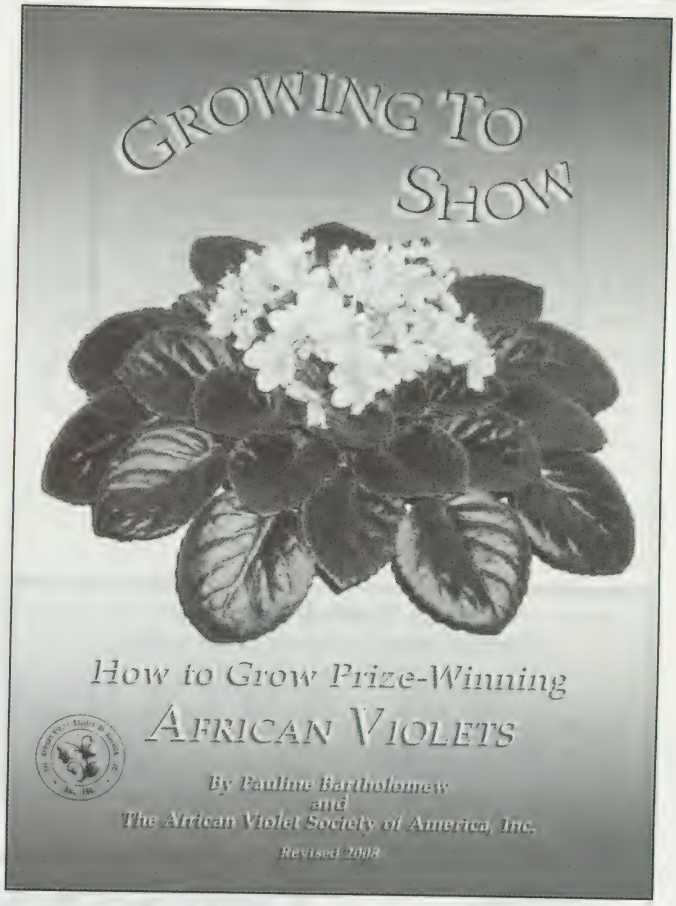

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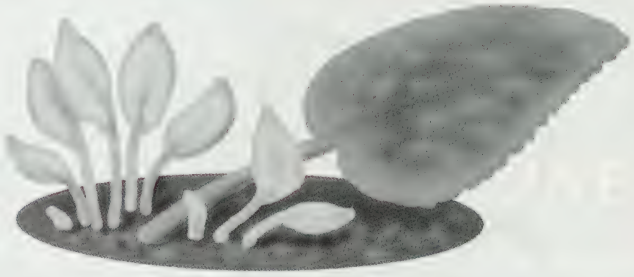

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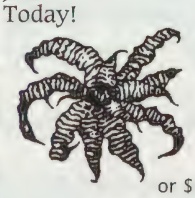

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African Violet MAGAZINE

September • October 2016 Volume 69 Number 5

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Exhibited and Hybridized by:
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Semiminiature
Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

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OFFICERS

Winston J. Goretsky, President
32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada T3L 2B2
email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Dr. Richard Nicholas, 1st Vice President
3113 Deerfield Dr., Denton, TX 76208
email: randanicho@aol.com

Sue Ramser, 2nd Vice President
2413 Martin, Wichita Falls, TX 76308
email: ramserwf@wf.net

Susan Anderson, 3rd Vice President
4040 E. Maldonado Dr., Phoenix AZ 85042
email: sanderson122@cox.net

Edna Rourke, Treasurer
99 Old Stratford Rd., Shelton, CT 06484
email: APapillon@aol.com

Mary Corondan, Secretary
434 Plumwood Way, McKinny, TX 75069
email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

John Carter, Immediate Past President
1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012
email: johntcarter@valornet.com

STAFF

Ruth Rumsey, Editor
2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702
email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Cindi Nofziger, Advertising Manager
1035 Lakewood Dr., Albany, OR 97321
email: ccnofziger@comcast.net

Sue Hoffmann, Publications Chairman
2809 Forest Hills Ct., Virginia Beach, VA 23454
email: violetsue123@outlook.com

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

Email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

As I write this, I'm realizing that the days are drawing slightly shorter with each sunset. Autumn will be upon us and that means that a lot of local clubs will be resuming their meetings and club activities.

If you're not a member of a local club, or don't know how to find one, check out our website, which lists the most recent information that we have about local affiliate clubs which might be in your area.

Leaves sold at convention by "Violets and More"

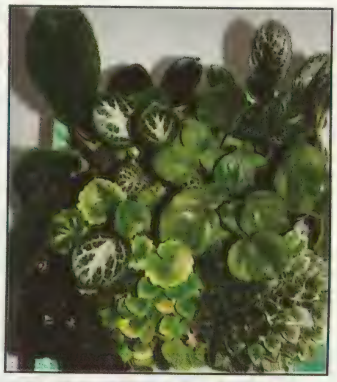
If you are a member of a local affiliate club, please check the website to ensure that the information about your group is correct and submit any changes by using the link on that page. Sometimes, information changes and doesn't get updated and new members looking for a local club to join may not get the most accurate details, so spend a moment and help get things corrected, it helps everyone keep current.

I've been carefully watching some of my new plant cuttings from convention and already have babies that need to be potted up. Some grow more quickly that others and I'm always excited when I see the little clumps beginning to form.

"Morgan's Chutney Popcorn"

I bought several leaves at convention, which were each prepared in vermiculite and hanging on a rack in a plastic zip lock baggie by a paperclip. I brought these home and just hung them up alongside of my plant stands and decided to see how they performed. They have already produced babies and I've found that this is a great way to set aside a few leaves when you're grooming a plant and don't have a leaf tray ready in which to start them. You can simply put a bit of the moist medium into the baggie and get the leave started and pass it on to a friend and it allows you to prepare the leaf cuttings far in advance, so that you're not in a rush at the last minute.

This can be a good way to share cuttings at a meeting or leaf exchange and you'll know that they will already have a good start to begin with. Sometimes, we don't always have the time to immediately start our cuttings the way we should and this buys us the time to ensure that they are not lost. Just hang them up around your plant stands and forget about them for a while and you'll be surprised at how quickly they grow little clumps.



Leaf tray ready to be potted up

I've been noticing the number of articles which have been submitted for the special contest. They are all really great and the panel who will be deciding on the winning entries, certainly have their work cut out for them. I think it's just fantastic to see how encouraged we have all been by these articles and I certainly hope the trend of new article submissions doesn't end when the contest is over. We all learn from each other and sharing our knowledge is how we accomplish that. Why not sit down and share some information with us. We all have interesting experiences that we don't think others would be interested in hearing about, but sometimes what we take for granted, is the best new information that others can read. It also reminds us that sometimes we even forget about the basics and hearing them again can prompt us to remember things we may have forgotten over time. Give it a shot and see what you're able to concoct.

Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

In this issue, the September/October 2016 AVM, we have five Contest entries. How wonderful it is to open a folder and look through some of the best articles to ever appear in this magazine. ***Thank you***, to those contestants who jumped right into the competition! It is so exciting to know that there are articles available, and I don't have to look through older issues for something that *might* interest our readers. Or, beg known authors to *please* contribute.

AVSA has so many gifted writers! I have to again commend **Pat Hancock** for coming up with the **Contest** idea, and the fantastic prizes. Pat is such an asset to our organization.

Our President, **Winston Goretsky**, has an article on the Reclassification of *Saintpaulia*, on page 46. In November, 2015, Winston and **Bill Price**, attended an international conference in Guilin, China. His article is an interview with **Michael Möeller**, and outlines what this new classification means to the AV world.

On page 50, **Steve Harris** has an article on *Violet Lights and Stands*. Steve is one of those wonderful spouses of a violet grower. He spoke with me at the convention about the shelves he built for his wife, and the "special touches" he added for convenience, as well as the construction process. In Steve's article, he also included a chart with the financial breakdown of the project.

How do **you** provide light? Do you have a massive collection, or just a few of "favorites," or do you find yourself somewhere in between?

I would like to ask you, our members, to share information on how you provide light for your plants, and maybe give another member an idea for a better situation than what they currently are using.

On page 52 you'll find an article, *CT Violet*, by **Katherine Read**. Katherine noticed characteristics in her new plantlets that she had never seen before and wrote to share it with us. She's included many photos that show the plants at various times. I have never seen this before in any of my plants. Her new blossoms open up fully during the day, and some seem to close at nightfall.

I always enjoy reading an article by **C. John Burk**. He has contributed to the AVM for many years, and does a good job of sharing his experiences with other African violet growers. He is a very interesting writer, and I appreciate him sharing his growing experiences. Read his new article, *Desperate Measures*, on page 15.

The plants in my office are blooming like crazy - and it's still a Texas summer outside! With all the rain that has moved along the Gulf coast in the past week, though, we are looking for temps only in the high 80s this week. They bloom all year, even those on the wide windowsills in my office, with a northern exposure. In the winter when we have our share of freezing temperatures, I place low pieces of cardboard between the plants and the windowpanes.

Other plants are on an old teacart, and others on top of my filing cabinet, an overturned metal wastebasket, and the side of a broken shredder. I mentioned these growing spaces before, and I have found out that I am not the only grower with what is "the perfect exposure," with little space to waste!

Wishing you a fantastic autumn, and thriving African violets!

Ruth

2017 AVSA Convention Awards Orlando, FL Convention

By Linda Hall

Specific Awards - Amateur Division

Best Holtkamp Collection - $300, rosette & Coin - Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
2nd Best Holtkamp Collection - $200 & rosette - Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
3rd Best Holtkamp Collection - $200, rosette - Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection - $300 - Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)
2nd Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection - $200 - Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)
3rd Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection - $100 - Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)
Best Robinson Collection - $200 - The Violet Barn (NY)
2nd Best Robinson Collection - $100 - The Violet Barn (NY)
Best Lyndon Lyon Collection - $200 - Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Paul Sorono (NY)
2nd Best Lyndon Lyon Collection - $100 - Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Paul Sorono (NY)
Best Buckeye Collection $200 - Pat Hancock (OH)
2nd Best Buckeye Collection $100 - Pat Hancock (OH)
Best Cajun Collection - $75 - Belinda Thibodeaux (LA)
Best Cajun Collection - $25 - Elmer Godeny (NJ)

Specific Variety Awards - Amateur Division

Best "Concord" - $100 - Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)
Best "Tina" (Maas) - $25 - Janet Riemer (NJ)
Best "Rodeo Country" - $75 - Spring Branch AV Club (TX)
Best "Del's Spring Blush" - $50 - Violet Reflections Group (IN)
Best "Aca's Libbie" - $50 - Tom & Libbie Glembocki (NC)
Best "Lonestar Helen Mahr" - $50 - Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)
Best "Lonestar Twilight" - $25 - Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)
Best "Happy Cricket" - $10 - Town & Country AV Society (OH)
Best "EK Goluboglazaia Rossiia" - 25 - Starz and Streps (MI)
Best "LE-Karusel" $25 - Starz and Streps (MI)
Best "Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler" $100 - Pat Hancock (OH)
Best "Chinook Wind" - $50 - Tom & Libbie Glembocki (NC)
Best Ozark Sinninigia - $35 - Dave's Violets (MO)
Best "Bob Serbin" - $25 - John & Doris Brownlie (Canada)
Best "Jersey Snowflakes" $25 - Bob Kurzynski (NJ)

Specific Awards - Commercial Division

Best Holtkamp Collection - $300 & rosette Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
2nd Best Holtkamp Collection - $200 & rosette Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
3rd Best Holtkamp Collection - $100 & rosette Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)

Other Awards - Amateur Horticulture

$25 - Trudy Brekel (CO)
$25 - Janet Riemer (NJ)
$25 - Kurt Jablonski (FL)
$100 - Oriana Harrison (OH)
$100 - Rocky Mountain Streptocarpus Society

Other Awards - Design Division

$50 - Janet Fox (CA)

Other Awards - Undesignated

$25 - Stephanie & Mark Griffith (PA)
$100 - Winston & Laurel Goretsky (Canada)

In Search of New Violets

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy *Email:* JSmith4@bsu.edu

One of the more unusual leaf mutations in African violets is one that changes the positioning of the veins in the leaf blade. The normal African violet leaf has what botanists call pinnate venation. Look at the leaf and you should see one main vein running down the center of the leaf. Smaller side veins branch off of the main vein and keep dividing to form a network of veins through the blade of the leaf. The term pinnate venation comes from the way a feather also has a single vein running down the center. Some plants have other arrangements of their veins. Many plants in the monocot group like corn, lilies, and orchids have a series of parallel veins of nearly equal size that run the length of the leaf blade. A few plants have palmate venation. This is when the plant has several main veins that radiate from a single point like fingers radiating from the palm of an open hand. Maple tree leaves are a good example of palmate venation. There is a main vein running down the center of each lobe in a maple leaf.

A mutation in vein pattern that appeared many years ago in African violets is similar to the palmate venation. There isn't a single main vein, but several veins of similar size that radiate from the base of the blade where it joins the leaf petiole. This mutation is usually called "Clackamas foliage" or sometimes watermelon foliage. The name "Clackamas" comes from a county and city in Oregon where the mutation was first discovered. Clackamas foliaged plants have never been common. Some older cultivars with this mutation are 'Fool's Gold', 'Clackamas Rattler' and 'Winnie the Pooh.'

Recently George MacDonald of the "Mac's" series plants has introduced several new cultivars with Clackamas foliage such as 'Mac's Coral Clackamas' and 'Mac's Zany Zideka'. Probably the most successful plant has been 'Mac's Walkabout Uluru,' which combines miniature size Clackamas foliage with crown variegation and pink blooms. There have been a number of discussions on some of the Facebook hybridizing groups about how Clackamas foliage is inherited and how plants with this trait might be improved. Those discussions are the basis for the questions in this column.

Q: How is Clackamas foliage inherited?

A: Clackamas foliage is a simple dominant mutation so it is very easy for hybridizers to work with. A plant showing Clackamas foliage has at least one copy of the trait. Using a plant with Clackamas foliage should produce approximately a 1:1 ratio of seedlings with the trait in next generation. The trait can be inherited from the seed parent or the pollen parent.

Q: Does Clackamas foliage show a dose affect? That is, does a plant with one copy of the trait look different than a plant with two copies?

A: I'll have to say that I don't know if a double dose or homozygous Clackamas foliage plant has ever been produced. Most of the plants have been produced from single dose parents and should have a single dose of the trait themselves. I wouldn't be surprised if a double dose plant has a different appearance, but I'd be guessing as to what the changes might be.

Q: Can Clackamas be expressed in larger plants? Most of the cultivars seem to be miniatures.

A: I'm going to speculate that Clackamas has a tendency to decrease the plant's overall size similar to the way the girl foliage mutation reduces plant size. Recently I've seen pictures of an attempt to produce a larger plant with Clackamas foliage. The F1 seedlings were probably going to end up as semi-miniatures. However, crossing these F1 Clackamas seedlings with a standard sized plant should have a good chance of increasing the plant

size and retaining the Clackamas foliage trait. The only concern I have is that the Clackamas vein pattern may be structurally weaker than standard leaves with pinnate venation and the leaves might break if they get beyond a certain size. I'm hoping the hybridizer that was pursuing this goal is successful in increasing the overall plant size with Clackamas foliage by continuing to cross with standardized sized plants.

Q: Any tips for what to cross Clackamas foliage plants with to get good expression of the trait in the F1 generation?

A: I'd suggest using plants with plain boy foliage. Any other leaf mutations such as quilted foliage, girl foliage, spooned foliage etc. will confuse the expression of the Clackamas veins in the F1 offspring. Keep the cross simple by only varying one leaf or vein trait at a time.

Q: Can Clackamas foliage be combined with other leaf mutations such as longifolia foliage or bustled foliage?

A: Well, we won't really know until we try. Again, I'd worry about the structural integrity of the leaf and a tendency for breaking especially if there was a large longifolia leaf produced. However, the combinations might work out pretty well. Longifolia foliage, bustled foliage and Clackamas are all dominant leaf mutations so combining them together would be relatively easy. How well the plants would shape for show is another question. Sometimes the more interesting mutations are not show worthy, but only have values as curiosities. I'd certainly encourage any ambitious hybridizers to try combining these and other leaf traits together just to see what will happen. It's possible that some new type of interaction may occur producing a brand new type of foliage for African violets. That's part of the fun with this hobby.

Q: Can Clackamas foliage be combined with leaf variegation?

A: Yes, 'Mac's Walkabout Uluru' has crown variegation. I would presume that a Clackamas plant with Tommie Lou variegation could be easily produced by using the Tommie Lou variegated plant as the seed parent and the Clackamas plant as the pollen parent. The seedlings should all have different degrees of Tommie Lou variegation and about half should have the Clackamas veins. Getting a Clackamas plant with mosaic variegation should also be possible, but would take some backcrossing to get the mosaic variegation back out.

Join us at the
AVSA National Convention in Orlando, FL
May 28 - June 4, 2017

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Olive Ma Robinson – Naples, NY

'Ma's Autumn Frost' (10814) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Semidouble-double chimera pink frilled pansy/blue fantasy, white stripe. Dark green, quilted. **Standard**

'Ma's Blue Penguin' (10815) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Semidouble-double chimera blue ruffled pansy/white stripe, blue edge. **Variegated** medium green and white, ruffled, serrated. **Standard**

'Ma's Crystal Doll' (10816) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Semidouble chimera white star/variable blue eye; white stripe, frilled green edge. **Variegated** medium green and white, quilted, ruffled. **Standard**

'Ma's Fourth Planet' (10817) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Double red ruffled star. **Variegated** dark green and white, plain/red back. **Standard**

'Ma's Happily Ever After' (10818) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Semidouble-double chimera pink ruffled pansy/blue fantasy, white stripe. **Variegated** medium green and white, ruffled, serrated. **Standard**

'Ma's Message from Mars' (10819) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Semidouble red ruffled star/thin white edge. **Variegated** dark green and white, plain/red back. **Standard**

'Ma's Pink Beetles' (10820) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Double pink ruffled star/raspberry sparkle edge. **Variegated** dark green, white and pink, quilted, serrated/red back. **Standard**

'Ma's Red Bobbin' (10821) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Semidouble red ruffled star. **Variegated** dark green and white, quilted/red back. **Standard**

'Ma's Voodoo Doll' (10822) 04/01/2016 (O. Robinson) Semidouble dark purple star/frilled green edge. **Variegated** medium green and white, quilted, ruffled. **Standard**

*****

Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses – Dolgeville, NY

'Adventurous Owen' (10823) 04/27/2016 (D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble purple frilled star/white edge. **Variegated** medium green and white, quilted. **Standard**

'Bloodshot' (10824) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double red pansy/variable white edge. **Variegated** dark green and beige, spooned. **Standard**

'Burnt Autumn' (10825) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble red frilled pansy/darker veins, variable lighter spots. Dark green, serrated/red back. **Standard**

'Christmas Mood' (10826) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble white pansy/pink blush eye. **Crown variegated** light green and yellow. **Semiminiature**

'Honey Bee' (10827) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double yellow-white frilled star. Medium green, quilted. **Standard**

'Johnny Angel' (10828) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double blue star/slightly ruffled raspberry edge. Dark green, quilted/red back. **Standard**

'Little Treasure Trove' (10829) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble pink star/blue fantasy, white edge. Medium green, quilted. **Semiminiature**

'Love Potion' (10830) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double chimera pink frilled star/blue fantasy, blue to reddish-burgundy stripe, thin raspberry edge. Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back. **Standard**

'Mason's Charm' (10831) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble

chimera pink star/variable fantasy, blue stripe, ruffled white edge. **Variegated** dark green and beige, quilted/red back. **Standard**

'Midnight Waterfall' (10832) 04/27/2016 (D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double pink large star/blue fantasy, thin white edge. Dark green, quilted/red back. **Standard**

'Pastel Princess' (10833) 04/27/2016 (D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single light blue sticktite frilled pansy. Medium green, scalloped, girl foliage. **Standard**

'Peppermint Marshmallow' (10834) 04/27/2016 (D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble white frilled pansy/pale pink patches. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, ruffled, serrated. **Large**

'Poetry Man' (10835) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble chimera white pansy/plum stripe. Medium green, ovate, quilted. **Semiminiature**

'Rock Star' (10836) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double chimera fuchsia star/white stripe. Light green, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

'Slight Infatuation' (10837) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double pink star/darker eye, wide lavender-pink sparkle band, thin pink edge. Dark green, quilted. **Semiminiature**

'Sweethearts Dance' (10838) 04/27/2016 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double vivid pink pansy/blue fantasy. Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back. **Standard**

'Total Devotion' (10839) 04/27/2016 (D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single blue sticktite frilled pansy/variable white eye. Dark green, quilted/red back. **Standard**

'Warm Embrace' (10840) 04/27/2016 (D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble light pink large star/wide white frilled edge. Medium green, quilted, serrated. **Large**

'Warrior Spirit' (10841) 04/27/2016 (D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble dark pink star/blue fantasy, frilled green edge. Dark green, wavy/red back. **Standard**

'White Tiger' (10842) 04/27/2016 (D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double white star. **Variegated** medium green and beige, quilted, pebbled. **Standard**

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Joan Baker – Thief River Falls, MN

'Two-w Clever Girl' (10843) 05/28/2016 (J. Baker/A. Wolgast-Widell) Double white pansy. Light green, girl foliage. **Miniature**

'Two-w Manita' (10844) 05/28/2016 (J. Baker/A. Wolgast-Widell) Semidouble-double white star/blue mottling, fringed green edge. Light-medium green, ruffled **Standard**

'Two-w Miss Sophie' (10845) 05/28/2016 (J. Baker/A. Wolgast-Widell) Double pale pink wavy star/thin dark fuchsia edge. Dark green, plain, slightly quilted, scalloped/red back. **Standard**

'Two-w Sandellen' (10846) 05/28/2016 (J. Baker/A. Wolgast-Widell) Single white bell/thin green edge. **Variegated** medium green and white, longifolia. **Semiminiature**

REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

'Bashou' (9829) Change description to "*Semi-double*-double lavender pansy. Medium green, *pebbled*, serrated." (changes in *italics*)

Question Box

By Sue Haffner

3015 Timmy Ave. • Clovis, CA 93612

Email: sueh@csufresno.edu • haff.sue2@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

As this is a question and answer column, I have a question: How did you get interested in African violets? My introduction, as I have related before, was via a neighbor in my apartment complex. She had the greenest thumb of anyone I've ever met and her windowsills were always full of blooming violets. My east-facing window bore ferns, begonias, and what other gesneriads I could find at local garden shops. But not violets. Was it that they were too common? Did I feel they were not a challenge to grow? I really don't recall what I was thinking then. But my neighbor kept plying me with violets and urging me to attend the local African violet club meetings. What can I say! I've been a member of that club now for many years.

Of course, this scenario can go in the opposite direction. I have a friend who got interested in African violets when he was in the Navy. He was stationed at a naval air station near a small town. He lived off base and started buying violets and growing them on his windowsill. They did well in that location. One day a navy buddy came by. Seeing the plants, he exclaimed. "My grandma would go crazy over these!"

Grandma!! These are grandma plants? His enthusiasm leaked away like air out of a punctured balloon. (He didn't give up on horticulture, though—he's now a dedicated grower of cacti and succulents.) I suppose the moral is that our plant interests can depend on our life experiences.

I have another story to share: Just recently our club was contacted by a teacher at a local college. She was trying to save the last few violets that her mother had grown, her mother now lost to dementia. The teacher had been on vacation and had hired someone to water the plants in her absence. She came home to a bunch of dead plants, but one still appeared to have a bit of life left. Could we help her with the plant? I'm the person she called, so I asked her to email me a photo of the plant. When I saw it I gave an involuntary gasp. On top of a pile of brown mush there was a single wilted-looking green leaf. I mulled over how to respond in a way that gave her any hope, though it was obvious when talking to her that she was not a plant grower. Yes, I could recommend that she try to propagate that one leaf, but how successful would she be, with her busy schedule. She wanted someone to look at the plant in person, and a member who lives near her volunteered. They played phone tag for a few days but ultimately didn't connect, our member having long work hours herself. I've thought a lot about that poor plant ever since, but as one of our members said, "We're not miracle workers."

Q. My pink-flowered violet started producing deep purple blooms. What happened? My friend said that, as that plant was right next to a violet with purple flowers that made it start blooming purple too. Is that even possible? Could an insect have been responsible?

A. I have to say that the notion that violet blossom color might be contagious had never occurred to me. No, of course, the proximity of a purple-flowered plant did not cause the pink to turn purple. What might have happened is that the pink plant may have been an unstable hybrid, perhaps a bi-color to begin with, or a purple fantasy that reverted. The grower should keep an eye on that plant. It may start blooming pink again. I would recommend repotting it, if it hasn't been repotted in some time. It may just need a "kick in the pants" to start producing its usual blossoms. I don't think any insect was the culprit.

Q. I have problems now with leaves. New leaves on some of my violets are turning in until the leaf is pointed instead of rounded. All my plants are in a light porous soil mix. All are getting plenty of light and fertilizer with Schultz's Instant, 20-20-20 and Peter's 12-30-14. Could I be over-fertilizing?

A. As the grower did not say at which rate these fertilizers are applied - that is, how much and how often - it is hard to say if over-fertilization is the problem here. The recommended rate is 1/4 teaspoon per gallon of water, used at each watering (or even that may be cut in half). The more fertilizer used, the quicker the buildup of toxic salt levels in the soil. This can be seen in the deterioration of the new growth, which may be very small and pale in color. Leaching is a way to treat salt buildup. Pour tepid water through the soil until it runs freely from the drainage holes for at least 60 seconds. She could do that with all the plants, not just those showing the problem she relates here. I would also recommend repotting, removing as much of the old mix as possible from the roots, and holding off on the fertilizers for awhile.

Q. I gave my aunt a gift of a violet growing in a cute self-watering pot (it's shaped like a seashell). She would always mention how well the plant was doing. The pot came with some general watering instructions, which she followed. Lately, though, she called me to say that the plant was drooping; something was wrong. When I went over, I found that the soil ball was pretty dry, even though she had been keeping the reservoir filled. I removed the plant and washed the pot and reservoir; trimmed the plant and repotted it in fresh soil mix. Now she says it's drooping again. I'm wondering if we got a defective pot.

A. Well, first I think you have to make sure the pot will function by watering the plant from the top and seeing that the unglazed bottom of the pot gets moist before putting it together with the reservoir. Also, if the water in your area is hard, high in pH, it's quite possible that the pores in the bottom of the pot are clogged with salt buildup. In this case, mere washing might not be enough to restore the pot's function. Soak the pot in a vinegar solution (1 cup of vinegar to 3-4 cups of water). You might hear a sizzling sound or see bubbles rising: that's the vinegar doing its job of dissolving the buildup. Soak for 20-30 minutes. Use a brush to scrub off any residue. Some people will even use sandpaper on the unglazed portion of the pot. Try this and see if it helps.

Q. I've heard that hot water can be used to treat African violet soil pests. Is that really true?

A. Short answer: yes. Years ago growers were recommended to dunk pots in hot water to kill soil mealybugs and any other soil-borne pests. Some writers even suggested immersing the entire plant. One of our old members did that and described the result as looking like a pile of wilted spinach. (Water too hot?) Another former member, who grew gorgeous violets, came up with a similar treatment all by himself. He was living up in Montana at the time, in a house he described as cold and drafty. If a violet was not doing well, he would put it in a frying pan with an inch or so of water and slowly heat it on the stove. When it reached a certain temperature he would take it off the stove and let it drain. He said this was a great rejuvenation treatment for most violets. A current recommendation is to subject just the violet roots to 160-degree temperature water for thirty seconds. After this bath, which should kill any pests that might cling to the roots, just pot up the plant as usual.

Photo Credit: **Mel Grice**

Nematanthus 'Black Gold'

Robert McMeel of Louisiana showed this beautifully grown specimen of *Nematanthus* 'Black Gold' at the Dixie AV Convention in Atlanta this April. He grew it in his warm greenhouse - so it was perfectly shaped and loaded with flowers. *Nematanthus* will perform much better for those of us who live in the northern states if grown outdoors in moderate to light shade than if it is grown as a houseplant. *Mel Grice*

(Read Mel's full article about this beautiful plant on page 6 in the July/August '16 AVM. This photo was inadvertently left out of that issue. Editor)

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence *Email:* missjennae@yahoo.com

Nadeau African Violet Seeds

Nadeau African Violet Seeds offer both the hobbyist and professional yet another way to produce more of the plants they love. The website was very easy to locate, starting with a Google search. The site was the first option in the search results, and clicking on it brought the Home page right up.

This page provides the basic who, what and how information. The buyer can expect a 25 to 35% germination rate on the seeds. Explanations are very clear. Ronn Nadeau, founder of the company, explains the variables related to growing from seed. He states that African violet seeds are affected by light, heat, and the mix they are planted in. Every plant that results from a packet of seed will be different. The Home page also features a slide show of many different varieties of African violets.

The Research page is amazing. A complete scientific write-up, featuring and abstract, history and objectives, materials, methods, results and discussion are included. A table presents the results of germination experimentation in an easy to understand manner. The research is very interesting. And the resulting information is informative regarding the different germination mixes. (This work was published in this magazine in the November/December 2009 issue.)

The seed buyer can consult the Instruction page for very clear, step-by-step directions. Excellent photographs clarify the written directions. Important facts are highlighted. For example, the planter was instructed not to cover the seeds with the mix, as they need light to germinate. The packets of seeds come with a full guarantee. Nadeau will either replace them or refund the buyer's money if they are not happy.

The Photo Gallery is rather small, just 19 images. It presents mostly flowers, although there are a couple of photos showing the germination mix and supplies. The photos are very well done.

About Us tells Ronn's story. His is probably similar to many of ours. His grandmother had African violets and got him started in the hobby. However, he got busy with life, and took a 20-year hiatus from African violets. He then went to a show, and was hooked again. This page also describes the growth of a family business, and tells where they are now.

The Testimonials page is typical. All reviews were five-star. The Contact page provides the typical address, phone and email information.

Nadeau seeds are shipped worldwide. The shopping experience is similar to other websites as the shopper clicks on products they want to add to their cart. However, a reminder pops up to help the shopper remember to enter a discount code. Nadeaus pay the postage worldwide for their products. They cannot, however, ship either the germination mix or kit overseas.

All products are offered in a menu on the left side of each page. There are seed packets for standards, trailers, fantasy and variegated plants. The germination mix can be purchased, as can the germination kits. The latter contain Nadeau's Germ'n Mix, a pot, measuring cup, and a plastic bag. They also cater to a wholesale market.

This website is both informative and interesting. It takes the mystery out of growing African violets by seed. It inspired me to consider trying this method of propagation.

This web page can be found at nadeausafricanvioletseeds.com

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Jersey Little Devil

Exhibited by: ***B. J. Ohme***
Hybridized by: ***R. Kurzynski***
Semiminiature

Desperate Measures

By C. John Burk

I have grown African violets for much of my life. When I was in junior high school, around 1947, a kind neighbor gave me leaf cuttings of *'Blue Boy,' 'Blue Girl,' 'Pink Beauty'* and *'White Lady'* from her east-facing breakfast nook collection. These plants, or their descendants, followed me to college, along with the original species, *Saintpaulia ionantha*, and an assortment of other varieties I had managed to acquire. Among these were *'Neptune'* and *'Viking,'* introduced by the firm of Armacosst and Royston in the 1920s and the new *'Lady Geneva,'* which was much sought-after around mid-century. I described this phase of my adventures with *Saintpaulia* in an article entitled "Living Heirlooms" [*African Violet Magazine*, Vol.47, September 1994]. I also described my partially successful attempts to bring together, to reassemble, this collection once again.

Twelve years or so later, during a December ice storm, looking out over our plant shelves at the accumulating sleet in the back yard, I took some comfort in the familiar ranks of blooming violets between me and the bad weather. However, I was also disturbed by the problems I saw upon closer inspection of my collection. The plants were in dire need of repotting, some with long ungainly necks, a possible case of crown rot; the usual symptoms of neglect. I carried out an inventory [see "Winter Help for an Aging Collection.", *African Violet Magazine*, Vol. 61, May, 2008], and made a list of resolutions: in the future, repotting would be done according to a regular schedule, not haphazardly; attention would be paid to nutrition. I would try again to find varieties I had for a time and lost – *'Blue Boy,' 'Blue Girl,' 'Sailor Boy'* and *'Amethyst,'* were surely still around and I would find convincing substitutes for *'Pink Beauty'* and *'White Lady,'* which seem to have been lost forever. By early the following spring, marked improvement was evident. The plants were responding to good care very much like old friends recuperating from an illness.

Then in the winter of 2012 or 2013, disaster struck! It did not strike suddenly as when in the early 1950s, a glass top shelf in a window with a part of my collection gave way, sending an avalanche of pots cascading through the two glass shelves below, but it came slowly, over several months. Some plants slowly wilted, refusing to take up water, the miniatures perished outright. Most of the plants stopped blooming and all seemed to be in various degrees of decline, showing the kinds of symptoms described in the several articles by Ronn Nadeau which appeared in *African Violet Magazine*. Some plants showed distorted foliage of the very sad specimen of *'Rob's Boolaroo.'* Shown in "Testing African Violets Using Elisa INSV ImmunoStrips" (AVM 66, No. 4, August 2013, p.22). I had no doubts that my collection was infested with the Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus, INSV, that was plaguing collections elsewhere.

I was reminded of a situation that had developed at near-by Smith College. The College has held an annual fall chrysanthemum show for more than a century, since 1907, or earlier. The chrysanthemums shown for much of this period were hybrids of older varieties, crosses made annually by students in the horticulture classes. By the late 1990s, though, it was evident that the plants were in decline. New shoots were weak; many leaves were twisted and discolored, flower buds frequently aborted. In all, the collection showed a general lack of vigor that was recognized by a newly appointed garden director who decided to have the plants tested for viruses. He used the same diagnostic company, Agdia, that would later test African violets for Ronn Nadeau. Almost all the Smith chrysanthemums proved to be infected. The cost of "cleaning up" the collection was prohibitive and the entire collection was discarded. It was replaced for the annual Chrysanthemum show by plants grown from disease-free cuttings purchased new each year.

I was discouraged, but was reluctant to throw my African violet collection away just yet, despite

the appeal of the often beautiful varieties for sale at quite reasonable prices at a local supermarket. These were vigorous plants with flowers in bright colors of combinations that my old mentors, Montague Free and Helen Van Pelt Wilson, would never have anticipated [see Free's *All About African Violets*, published in 1951, or the first edition of *Helen Van Pelt Wilson's African Violet Book* from 1953.] Resisting temptation, I put off doing anything for a time and then noticed in early spring that the surviving plants were putting on new growth. Within months most of them were in flower. I recalled Nadeau's reminder that viruses may have *"quiescent symptomless periods followed by periods of full blown viral expression"* and sure enough, as the seasons progressed, I again noted symptoms of decline.

Still reluctant to resort to pesticides, but hoping to maintain at least some of the old varieties I had grown for decades, as a last resort I took what seemed rather desperate measures. First, I acquired a number of new three-inch plastic pots and clear plastic saucers to match. In a single afternoon, I reduced each of my old plants to a single crown cutting, saving only a 2–3 inch length of stem with its growing point and any healthy leaves that were attached. I inserted each cutting into its own pot filled with sterile potting soil and discarded the old pots and their saucers.

Treated in this manner were *Saintpaulia ionantha* and varieties I had grown while in high school in the 1950s: *'Blue Girl,' 'Lady Geneva,' 'Neptune'* and *'Viking.'* Acquired through the years was a gift plant I'd tentatively identified as 'Melodie Kimi' and another that resembled a double form of *'Lady Geneva.'*

There was a vigorous heirloom, *'Violet Beauty,'* with a pedigree going back to the 1960s, (this had been recommended particularly for beginners by Montague Free), and a rich dark purple Optimara from our son's short-lived collection he had in high school. And finally, we added a substitute for 'Pink Beauty,' a rich clear pink from the supermarket (this had entered the collection only after months of quarantine.) The white pots with the plantlets, sitting in saucers on plants shelves resembled a part of a research in a laboratory.

So what happened? For six months, nothing, so far as I could tell. The plantlets didn't wilt or wither, but neither did they grow. One or two flowered, probably from buds that had set before the cuttings were made in mid-August. Overall the collection seemed in a state of dormancy, a kind of arrested development. Then we detected a stir of growth. Looking closely, we saw that new leaves were forming and with them, flower buds. Slowly the plantlets came into bloom, and by early May nearly all were flowering. All seemed healthy except for a single plant of *'Blue Girl'* on which mealy bugs had appeared around the bases of the emerging scalloped leaves – a proof that viruses aren't the only pests one needs to watch for.

So what will happen in the future? Our collection is somewhat eccentric, made up of mostly old-fashioned varieties grown under old-fashioned conditions; in potting soil on shelves in a south-east-facing window. All the plants now have originated from stem cuttings, that were often decades old. The plants all seem to be flourishing. Will they continue to do so? This is a progress report. I make no predictions. We hope for the best, but we can only wait and see.

One of the earliest American illustrations of an African violet appeared in the 1904 edition of L. H. Bailey's Cyclopedia of American Horticulture where Saintpaulia ionantha is described as "one of the choicest of blue winter flowering plants."

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Ma's King Carnival

Exhibited by: ***Mary Corondan***

Hybridized by: ***O. Ma***

Standard

Coming Events

September 16 & 17 - TEXAS
The Ohio State AVS annual Show/Sale
Kingwood Center, Mansfield OH
Fri: Sale: 9am-5pm, Show 1pm-5pm
Sat: Show/sale 9am-4pm
Free to the public
Contact: melsgrice@earthlink.net or
(937) 654-7014

September 16 & 17 - TEXAS
Dallas Metro African Violet Fall Sale
North Haven Gardens
7900 North Haven, Dallas, TX 75230
Both Days: 10:00am to 4:00pm
Many varieties of African Violets and
Other Gesneriads
Two daily work shops on the care of
African Violets and Gesneriads
11am and 2:00pm - Public invited: No Charge
Contacts: Meredith Hall (254) 896-2397
m.hall@reagan.com or Bill Foster (972) 279-5993
1bpfoster@sbcglobal.net

September 17 - TENNESSEE
Memphis African Violet Society
Fall Sale 9 am - 4 pm
Central Christian Church
531 South McLean Blvd
(corner of McLean and Peabody)
Contacts:
Email: bakerbethrn@gmail.com
Beth Baker (901) 550-7860
https://www.facebook.com/memphisavs

September 24 - COLORADO
Rocky Mountain AV Council
Fall Sale, Saturday, September 24th
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Tagawa Gardens
7711 So. Parker Rd.
Centennial, CO 80016
Info: Trudy Brekel
violetlady7@msn.com
(303) 452-9015

October 1 - CONNECTICUT
Nutmeg State AVS Annual Show & Sale
1pm – 5pm
Homewood Suites by Hilton
6905 Main St., Stratford, CT
(exit 53 off Merritt Parkway)
Note: This is a one day sale only
not two as in the past.)

October 1 - MICHIGAN
Michigan State African Violet Society
Display & Sale, African Violets,
Streps & other gesneriads
Saturday, Oct 1: 10 am - 4:00 pm
Matthaei Botanical Gardens
1800 Dixboro Rd
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Info: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

October 1 – WASHINGTON
SaintPaulia Society of Tacoma
61st Judged Show & Sale 9am - 3pm
Watson's Nursery, 6211 Pioneer Way East,
Puyallup, WA
Info: Cathleen Graves (253) 535-5973
rythmslave@harbornet.com

October 1 - OREGON
Portlandia Violet Club, Portland, OR
African Violet sale, display, demonstrations,
African violets and other related plants
Portland Nursery, 9000 S E Division, Portland, OR
Hours: 10am to 3pm
Info: (503) 761-7861

October 1 & 2 - WISCONSIN
Wisconsin Council of AVC's
Annual Judged Show & Sale
Trinity United Methodist Church
300 Church St.
Lomira, WI
Sat. Oct 1, 10-5pm
Sun. Oct 2, 9-3pm
Info: Kevin Degner

(920) 426-3764
Email: kevin_degner@sbcglobal.net

October 1 & 2 - MINNESOTA
North Star AV Council - Twin Cities
AVSA Judged Show/Sale
Bachman's - 6010 Lyndale Ave.
Minneapolis, MN
Oct 1st, Saturday, 9am to 5pm
Oct 2nd, Sunday, 11am to 4pm
Info: Mary Kealy-Falk (952) 945-9025
email: NSAVCTC@hotmail.com
Blog: ***nsavctc.blogspot.com***
Facebook: North Star African Violet Council

October 1 & 2 – TEXAS
Spring Branch African Violet Club
Annual Fall Sale
Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004
October 1 - 10am - 4pm
October 2 - 10am - 3pm
Info: Karla Ross (281) 748-8417
Email: kjwross@yahoo.com

October 15 - PENNSYLVANIA
AVS of Philadelphia
Annual Judged Show/Plant Sale
Cathedral Village Retirement Community
600 E. Cathedral Road
Philadelphia, PA 19128-1933
Saturday October 15 - 11am - 4pm
Admission Free
Info: Carol Hastings (610) 272-6961
Email: sqcut2@aol.com
http:// www.phillyviolets.org

October 21 & 22 - ARKANSAS
Central Arkansas AVS
Show/Sale Oct. 21-22
North Little Rock Community Center
2700 Willow St., North Little Rock, Ark.
Fri. Oct 21- Noon - 5pm
Sat. Oct 22- 9am - 5pm
Info: Danny Tidwell (830) 481-9126
dantwell@yahoo.com
or Betty Ferguson bettywithviolets@gmail.com

October 21 & 22 - MINNESOTA
AVS of Minnesota
Fall Display/Sale
Northtown Mall
398 Northtown Drive N.E.
Blaine, MN 55434
Oct 21 - 10am - 7pm
Oct 22 - 10am - 4pm
Info: Connie Rowley
http://sites.google.com/site/avsminnesota

November 4 & 5 - TEXAS
Lone Star African Violet Council
Annual Show and Sale
Comfort Inn and Suites Plano East
700 Central Parkway East
Plano, TX 75074
Show: Friday, 1 pm - 4:30 pm;
Saturday, 8:30 am - 4 pm
Sale: Thursday, 12 pm - 5 pm;
Friday, 9 am - 4:30 pm
Saturday, 10 am - 4 pm
Theme - "Violets Enjoy North Texas Culture"
Info: Sylvia Leeds, roseotx@gmail.com
(903) 356-2540

November 5 & 6 – NEW JERSEY
Tristate AV Council
54th Annual Judged Show/Sale
Nov 5 - 1:30pm - 4:30pm
Nov 6 - 10:30am - 3pm
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
53 East Hanover Avenue
Morristown, NJ
Info: Stephanie Griffith
(215) 290-1611
sjdrongowski@gmail.com

November 5 & 6 - MISSOURI
African Violet Club of Greater Kansas City
Annual Judged Show & Sale
Loose Park Garden Center
51st Street & Wornall
Kansas City, MO
Saturday, Nov. 5 - 9am - 3pm
Sunday, Nov. 6 - 10am - 3pm
Info: kskd1@juno.com

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Heinz's Blue Flair

Exhibited by: ***Kurt Jablonski***

Hybridized by: ***H. Dornbusch***

Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Mac's Callow Fellow

Exhibited by: ***Anne Nicholas***
Hybridized by: ***G. McDonald***
Semiminiature

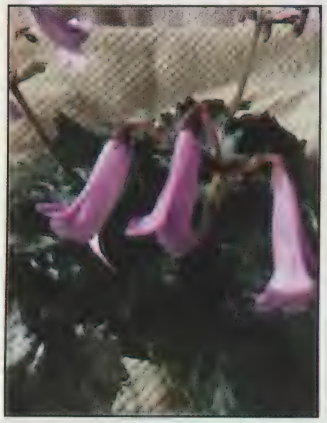
A Family Portrait

By Paul Kroll

4325 Two Rod Road • East Aurora, NY 14052
Email: pfkroll@roadrunner.com

Primulina 'Lola'

Primulina 'Lola' is an easy grower, and attractive even when not in bloom. The patterning (not called variegation on this type of *Primulina*) is silvery and attractive.



The serrated edges on the leaves also add to the attraction and decorative value. This plant could be entered and exhibited in the "grown for ornamental characteristics other than bloom" class of Gesneriads in an AVSA show.

When in bloom, the plant usually displays a full circle of well-distributed bloom stalks and several blooms per stalk as well. The blossoms are darker purple in color than many of the *Primulina* species or hybrids. I find the darker color of the blossoms to be a very attractive quality.

When doing some research on this plant, some of those whom I contacted feel that it is very similar in appearance to *Primulina* 'Diane Marie' which was hybridized by Bob Stewart and named for his wife, 'Dee'.

P. 'Lola' does display some of the same characteristics as *P.* 'Diane Marie,' such as the habit of one half of the leaf (one side of the vein) being a bit "pulled back" from the other side, which is flat and fully extended. (That is not a good description of this characteristic, but the best I can come up with at this time.)

Anyone who has grown or seen these plants will know what I am striving to say in a verbal description.

All *Primulina* plants, whether species or hybrids, enjoy some extra lime in their soil mix. Regular watering and fertilizer are the same as for my African violets. I grow them all under two T-8 tubes and anywhere on the shelf. Remember they all have the frustrating habit of displaying "resting buds!" The buds form and seem to just sit there for long periods of time before actually growing and blooming.

Primulina plants grow in the same conditions as your African violets. Try them!

Contest Entry

PACKING PLANTS FOR SAFE MAILING

By Helen Williams

Many people like to trade small plants with friends to get a few new varieties, but not everyone knows how to pack those little plants to guarantee a safe trip, and survival, until they reach their new home. This is a foolproof method you can try.

Before starting, you will need a kitchen garbage bag or something similar that you can cut squares out of. Plastic food wrap is too thin (unless you use Press n Seal.™) You will also need some polyester fiberfill, the kind you use to stuff pillows, or polyester batting. You can substitute cotton batting or even crumpled facial tissues, or the round cosmetic cleaning pads sold in drugstores, but they won't work quite as well. You will also need to buy a package of disposable Styrofoam coffee cups at the supermarket, about an 8 or 10 ounce size depending on the size of the plant you need to protect.

Have the plant groomed, and the soil in the pot moist, *not soaking wet*.

Remember, **the plant could be in the mail for more than a week**. Try to have the pot as nearly filled to the brim with soil as possible – do not try this with a half empty pot.

First of all, gently tuck a bit of your poly filler under the leaves and around the stem, covering the soil. Now, cut a slit halfway through the center line of the plastic square you have prepared. The size of the plastic square depends on the size of pot you are using. It needs to completely cover the pot and have several inches of spare plastic at the bottom. Place the plastic around the pot, with the stem of the plant in the center point of the slit you made, wrapping it securely around the pot and pulling it snug. Twist the excess plastic at the bottom into a twisted tail, and tape it securely so it doesn't come apart when you release it. Leave the tail hanging straight down. Now punch a hole in the bottom of one of your coffee cups and thread the tail through to the outside. A crochet hook comes in handy here. Slowly, but firmly, pull the plant down into the cup by the tail and tape the tail to the side of the coffee cup so the plant can't move around.

Finally, take a second coffee cup and gently work it over the first one, tucking leaves up into the top cup. Tape both cups together. If you've done this correctly, the resulting package can be tossed across the room with no damage to the plant inside, and the Styrofoam cup will also provide as a small measure of insulation against temperature fluctuations. Tuck your little cup packages into a carton and you are ready for the post office.

Contest Entry

RESET: Are your violets doing strange things? Some can be fixed, but others cannot...

By Neil Lipson

In thirty-five years of growing I have seen some VERY strange scenarios in the growing room. Plants growing like celery, unexpected outbursts of suckers, crazy sporting, as well as many other instabilities. Yes, some are worth propagating, and some are an annoyance to our personal tastes. Here are examples of such anomalies and what to do to correct the problem (except for blossom sports).

Violets that suddenly have tight centers are usually caused by too much concentration of nutrients, because of a new brand of soil. While this goes away by itself after a month, you will have a culture break, which complicates entering it into a show. If you see this happen, on all future repotting with that soil, drench the potted plant with rainwater (or distilled water), pour off the excess (inspect the color), and hold back fertilizing for about a month. I have seen this happen with Organic Mechanics and Fox Farm, to name two. Some growers will drench until the excess water is relatively clear.

An interesting, but detrimental growth pattern is what I call "celery growth." This can be caused by too little light, OR too much, where the plant is "protecting" or shielding itself from injury. Some varieties are known for this type of behavior like '*Optimara Annabelle*,' as shown in the photo. This is usually a genetic trait and will pop up under various conditions. Nothing can be done to prevent this from happening.

Another genetic trait that complicates your growing is excessive suckering. I have seen this with *'Kiwi Dazzler,' 'Hot Foot,'* and *'Ocean Eyes.'* Yes, you can pull off the suckers as they pop up, but this complicates the growing. This trait, however, is an advantage if you're growing a chimera, such as '*Kiwi Dazzler*.'

Because I grow a large number of pinwheels and fantasy violets, I see a LOT of sporting, both good and bad. Many of the fantasy violets revert back to solid, and the pinwheels can do some very strange things, like the pinwheel color bands can get bigger or smaller. One of the more unusual sports was with *'Love Struck,'* where the edge became much wider than the mother as shown in the photos below.

'Love Struck' normal blossom

'Love Struck' with wider edge

I have seen other violets "drift" away from the original bloom to something quite different. Some of these changes are actually desirable (at least to me). Another example is '*Perfect Harmony,*' shown to the right, before the change:

And, below is the plant today with a more pronounced edge, with some fantasy markings drifting into the blossom:

One of the chimeras that constantly changes for me, as well as many others, is *'Concord.'* I thought at one time it was temperature-related, but it turned out that it was not affected in that way. It just has a mind of its own. Here is my original *'Concord'* from over twenty years ago:

And, to the right is *'Concord,'* grown by Don Landek:

Below is what *'Concord'* just did to show how it never ceases to surprise you:

'Rebel's Splatter Kake' changes so frequently, that I'm not even sure what it is supposed to look like any more. In one case, part of the blossom reverted back to *'Rebel's Night Breezes'*!

In another variation of the same plant, it sported a very wide edge and bright colors in the foliage:

There were cases where the change that occurred was so striking in the blossoms that I tried blossom stalk propagation. Below, on the left, is *'Suncoast Peppermint Kathy.'* This is the normal chimera with the double blossom.

The "sport" turned into this:

However, after doing a blossom stalk reproduction that took about eighteen months, it reverted back to the original plant. Sometimes these chimeras can be very stubborn.

When a normally-variegated violet suddenly turns solid, it can be caused by numerous changes. An increase of decreased light can cause this. Also, too much nitrogen in the fertilizer will do the same. When I was growing *'Ann'* leaves, I used

Foliage Pro, which is 9-3-6 and it turned all of the new growth on the mother plant a solid green with no foliage. This helped tremendously when I was starting new leaves to get babies faster.

Below is a photo of Betty Bryant's *'Elizabeth,'* where I fed this plant some Foliage Pro to see if the new growth would be greener. Obviously, it did exactly what I had wanted.

When I first grew *'RS-Zabijaka,'* I was disappointed with the "bad hair day" growth that it exhibited, evident in the photo below:

I then gave it a second chance, and it totally turned around:

If you are like me, you love unusual violets, but there is a price to pay. Fantasy, chimeras, and others will act up. All you do is keep a backup, or better, give one to a friend to replace when these anomalies occur. Even the vintage and oldies will act up after many years. Life is full of surprises.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern time. He will return your call.

Jack of Clubs

Exhibited by: ***Richard Nicholas***
Hybridized by: ***K. Stork***
Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

In Memory

Sue Hill

Sue Hill, 95, passed away July 24, 2015 in Independence, MO. Sue grew superb African violets and gesneriads; she was a Master AVSA Judge and a Master Gesneriad Judge.

She belonged to The African Violet Club of Greater Kansas City, Heart of America Gesneriad Society, AVSA, The Gesneriad Society, Missouri Valley African Violet Council, and was a charter member of Mid America AVS. She was convention co-chair for the 1989 Kansas City AVSA Convention.

Sue also received the Hudson Memorial Affiliate Leadership Award in 1997. She served all the societies in many offices and was always there when you needed her.

Maxine George and Jean Patterson

Topeka AVS members were saddened by the passing of two of their Honorary Members, March 7, 2016.

Maxine George was a Charter Member of the TAVS, and was the society Secretary when the by-laws were written in 1987. At eighty-five, Maxine was a very active society member, growing award-winning African violets. She became an Honorary Member of the society when health concerns forced her to move to Louisburg, KS in 2010, to be with family.

Jean Patterson, 97, was also a Charter Member of the Topeka AVS, in Topeka Kansas. Jean was a very active society member, serving as an Officer, and growing and sharing award-winning African violets. Health issues kept her from attending meetings in the last few years, and she was made an Hornorary Member in July 2015.

Both of these loyal members of the Topeka AVS are missed.

Audrey J. Saizman

Audrey J. Saizman, longtime member of the Tidewater AVS, and former Treasurer for many years, passed away on December 25, 2015.

She was a long time resident of Norfolk, VA, a devoted member of St. John Lutheran Church, where the TAVS held their meetings and shows for many years with her assistance. Audrey had a kind heart and loved all kinds of plants.

Alex Early

Alex Early passed away June 3, 2016. Alex was a member of Moonlight AVS in Fort Worth, Charter Member of the North Texas AV Judges' Council, and the Lone Star AV Council for many years. She was also a Master Judge, and grew all sizes of violets, focusing on minis and semis in the last few years. Alex also won Best in Class several times at local shows with her trailers; as well as "Flowercade" (Fort Worth combined garden clubs show) with one of her trailers. She also grew beautiful *Streptocarpus*. Alex contributed generously to her club, with her plants and her knowledge. She is greatly missed.

Martha Turner

Martha Turner passed away May 5, 2016. She was a member of the First Nighter AVS of Dallas, and the Lone Star Council, elected as an officer in both clubs. Martha was also a Master Judge, Charter Member of the North Texas AV Judges' Council, and a Lifetime Member of AVSA. Martha won Best in Show at the Lone Star convention show five different times.

Martha's growing space was the talk of Dallas. She had a beautiful individually climate-controlled room where she grew so many stunning winners. She was legendary for her ability to fill a table with collections that were nearly perfect.

Martha and her husband, Byron, moved to Teague, TX after his retirement. She and Byron often invited their many 'violet' friends to visit their wonderful place in the country. She is survived by Byron and their daughter, Melanie. Many of her violet friends are making contributions to AVSA in her memory. Martha Turner is remembered with much love.

Contest Entry

Orchids, Bromeliads, Tropical Fish and... African Violets

By Bruce Pearson

Tropical World Nursery

It was 1953, I was seven years old and off on my own to my great aunt Leah's house three blocks down the street. This was in the small town of Otis, Kansas, and times are not much different now. Population there is still around 400. The only fear of getting there for me was the haunted house across the street and two doors down from my house. Once I got past that it was clear sailing.

Several months earlier in the dead of winter I was at her house and was intrigued with the little furry houseplants covered with small purple flowers growing in the window which she called violets. It amazed me that she had babies growing from just leaves of the plant in another small pot. I was going there that day to " help" her move them outside to the north side of her garage, and to help her repot some.

It was a breeze to get them moved out of the house and onto a board shelf raised a foot or so off the ground next to the garage. There were some old clay pots underneath the shelf from last year, and this is what we were going to plant them into. I was instructed to get some rich Kansas "dirt" from beneath some cedar trees growing on her property. This is what we would use to pot these little beauties in. Kansas clay and clay pots...have times changed?

Anyway, I was rewarded with a job well done and went home with my own leaves, which I anxiously awaited to have babies. Despite the fact that we had done almost everything wrong, by the end of the summer I had my own violet plants and was eager to go on to bigger and better things.

A year or so later, after moving to a farm in Oklahoma, I was promised my first orchid and the violets took a back seat. I became interested in all things tropical and soon had a collection of plants growing in a plastic Wardian case my father built for me, which we located in our sunny, enclosed porch. Following that was a small greenhouse, and by the time I was a junior in high school a small nursery was in the works.

In college I naturally pursued degrees in biology and ornamental horticulture. The nursery business grew. Now having two 100 foot greenhouses filled with heat demanding plants, the fuel shortages of the early 70's made it difficult to pay for the heat needed to get through the harsh winters of Northern Oklahoma. Having graduated from college and fulfilling my military obligations, I decided to move to South Florida.

Fast forwarding about forty years, I was able to purchase property not only in South Florida, but also in the state of Veracruz, Mexico. Growing long-term crops such as orchids, bromeliads, anthuriums, cactus, succulents, and rare tropical plants collected on many trips I was able to make to many tropical areas on the globe. With almost thirty acres of plants and over twenty greenhouses, African violets took a back seat. When we had them at the garden center, they were treated much like you see them being treated in grocery stores and home centers today. No names, and starving for attention, they definitely took a back seat. Why bother, after all they would all die by the time South Florida's summer heat rolled around.

And so, that is how it was until a little more than two years ago when on a plant collecting trip to Thailand, a friend of mine from Houston who was on the trip, convinced me to actually get involved with African violets. We saw a few plants in Bangkok, and if they could grow there, I was sure it was me and not the fault of the violets that they would die or severely linger during the hot Florida and eternal summer of Bangkok.

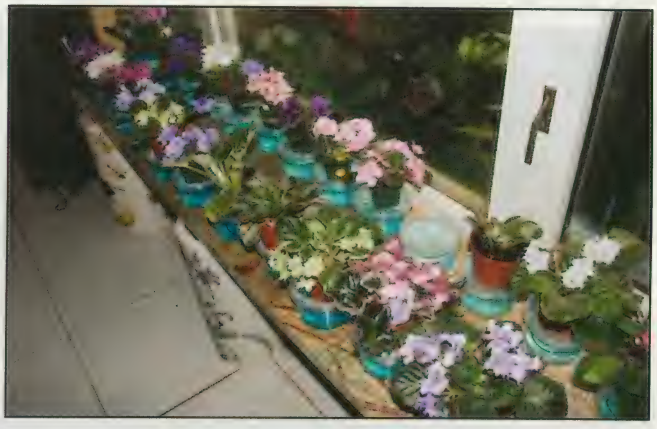
Donna (from Houston) begged me to go to the Nashville Convention, but I was unable to attend.

She however did, and then proceeded here to attend another plant event. She brought all the violets she had purchased the few days before at the convention. They were magnificent. Flowers bigger than golf balls, and just beautiful starter plants. I was getting hooked.

My big mistake was going to a Gesneriad and African violet show in Orlando shortly after returning from Thailand. Plants as big as bushel baskets and as tiny a chicken McNugget, with all kinds of leaf forms including variegated, and flower colors including even green ones. I loved the green ones. I was addicted, immediately, and not heeding the "little boats should stick close to shore," warning, left the spring show with seventy-six plants.

Returning home, my big concern was getting them thru the summer. Donna, (from Houston) told me air conditioning and more importantly air circulation would bring them through. I joined the local African violet society and with everyone's input, the plants almost thrived and by September I had many more plants than I was able to propagate. I had now graduated much of the collection to our outdoor lanai, three shelves high, with additional LED lighting. How different it was to actually be able to "see" the plants behavior almost immediately, as compared to orchids and bromeliads, which could take years.

We attended several more shows including the Kansas City National convention, each time adding more and more plants. Growing violets was a piece of cake, or so I thought. I was gaining plants faster than gaining experience. The brakes had to be applied. I have much more to say, but will continue the saga in a future article.



Episcia 'Butter Oak'

Exhibited by:
Penny Smith-Kerker

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Lonestar Lady

Exhibited by: ***Ann Shubert***
Hybridized by: ***R. Nicholas***
Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

The 5 Best Articles of 2015 in the African Violet Magazine are:

1. "Musings on Twisted fruit ... How I grow ***Streptocarpus***" Bill Price Jan/Feb 2015
2. "Beyond the Basics – Taming Trailers Part II" Sandy Skalski Nov/Dec 2015
3. "Discovering Unusual African violets – Longing for Longifolias Parts 1 & 2" Sayeh Beheshti Sept/Oct 2015
4. "Violets in the Classroom" Jennie Lawrence Sept/Oct 2015
5. "Judging the 'Other Gesneriads'" Dolores Gibbs July/August 2015

Congratulations to Bill Price, Sandy Skalski, Sayeh Beheshti, Jennie Lawrence, and Dolores Gibbs, who were recognized for their achievements at the AVSA 2016 convention in Albuquerque.

We'd like to include **your** articles on the ballot for next year. If you have an idea or some great growing tips to share with others, don't hesitate. Sit down and write an article.

Pat Hancock engineered a special contest for AVSA this year; see "A Worthwhile Contest" Jan/Feb 2016, pg. 14. Submitted articles marked "Contest Entry" will be in the running to win leaves of New Introduction plants. The contest runs from March 1, 2016 to April 1, 2017. The winner will receive 32 leaves; 2nd place will get 16; and 3rd will get 8. Don't let this wonderful opportunity pass you by.

We look forward to hearing from you. Submit your articles to AVM Editor, Ruth Rumsey at rrumsey@earthlink.net.

Sue Hoffmann, *AVSA Publications Chairman*

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Shows and Judges

Bill Foster, Shows and Judges Committee

3610 Gray Drive • Mesquite, TX 75150
Email: 1bpfoster@sbcglobal.net

Wow! What a great show and convention in Albuquerque! Sharon Shannon, Kathy Bell, and their committees are to commended for a great job. I would like to extend a big THANK YOU to all the exhibitors, judges, clerks, and consultants who played a large role in presenting a beautiful display, and seeing that the show is ready to be viewed on a timely basis. This is the first time in several years that I have been able to assign two clerks to each panel of judges. I was short, so I put out a plea to the hosting group and they answered.

To become a Master Judge a member must dedicate about twenty-five years to earn this honor. Congratulations to the following judges who will receive their Master Certificates in October: **Douglas Burdick**, New York, **Catherine Carter**, Florida, **Ron Davidson**, Texas, **Peggy Fergon**, Texas, **Pat Hancock**, Ohio, **Susan Hoffmann**, Virginia, **Shirley Jones**, Ohio, **Sharon Long**, Virginia, and **Judith Smith**, Pennsylvania. **Jim Boyer**, Florida, is a new teacher.

Here are some questions from the Judges Breakfast:

Hortense Pittman is something else, with 728 hybrids listed in First Class. I've heard she may begin a new series. What is your inside skinny on this rumor?

All I know is that Hortense won Best New Introduction, with *'Happy Heart'* at our recent show. I came home with that plant! Maybe this is the first of a "Happy" series!

Are mirrored terrariums allowed now? Should it be judged?

The answer to both is 'NO.' The one in the show had the mirror pretty well covered by plants. It got by Design Entries and the Judges. That seldom ever happens!

Please explain what is "right judging" for other gesneriads in the ornamental foliage classes? Isn't a clean, healthy plant enough?

NO, it isn't.

Last month I saw a Petrocosmea class with beautiful specimens but had six red ribbons and only a rosetifolia had a blue. Why?

The same answer will apply to both questions of the questions above: NO, a clean, healthy plant is not enough. Please refer to page 65 in the Handbook. It will explain that plants in these classes must have ornamental value and not just be a plant out of bloom.

How long do I need to own a violet before I can show it?

At least 3 months.

My club has a problem with two judges refusing to let the final panel see the collection sheets - choosing to vote on the final awards. What can be done?

YOU DO NOT VOTE! The final **MUST** be allowed to see the collection sheets. The highest scoring plants are awarded the top awards. Demand that the Judge's Chair make the sheets available. Any time this happens, the names of those judges should be reported to the Shows & Judges Committee,

At our show a trailing species was awarded "Best Trailer." I thought this was wrong but the other two judges did it anyway.

You were correct. **ALL JUDGES** should know this. It has been addressed in this column a number of times, so it is evident that some of our judges can't or choose not to read or abide by rules. If you are these judges, please study page 91 of the Handbook coming out soon. It was published in the S&J column as an addition to the last edition. **Note:** If this is shown on the information submitted to the "Winners Are" column ,it will not be published. Ineligible winners are omitted.

Should one judge be the leader of a

panel? Does a senior judge have greater say in a judging than a student judge?

A master, senior, or advanced judge are often selected to be the lead judge on a panel. Senior and advanced judges are experienced judges while student judges are apprentices and should be learning from the more experienced judges. Please review the definition of a student judge in the Handbook. This being said, a student is allowed to comment and they also have one of the three votes in decision making. Only master, senior, and advanced judges judge in AVSA convention shows and only one student judge may serve on a panel at Affiliate shows.

Can succulents now be used in a show?

Succulents can and have been used in flower and plant arrangements for a long time. They cannot, however, be used in the container garden classes.

Shouldn't very large plants get extra points because of the length time it takes to grow them?

No. Size does not determine the number of points a plant gets.

When judging natural container gardens, we ran into a container made with twigs twisted vines around a flat tray. We asked that it be moved to dish gardens, but the exhibitor insisted it belonged in natural gardens. We did not judge it and the exhibitor was not happy.

You did the right thing. The definition of a natural garden is a container that is one that is formed <u>naturally</u>. Some examples are driftwood, tree stumps, rocks, lava rocks, seashells, and even natural sponge. We could assume that a clay saucer is natural, just as the twigs were natural, but a clay saucer required help becoming a saucer just as these twigs required help in getting wrapped around the tray.

I have just heard, from a prominent judge, that the thinking about the construction of dish gardens had changed. Is it true that the height of plantings in a dish garden no longer have to be 1 1/2 times the diameter of the dish?

That is a point that is stressed by many that do, and give programs on dish gardens, and it seems to work well. However, <u>it has never been a rule</u>. If you asked any judge where that rule is stated in the Handbook, it will not be found.

This is getting lengthy. More from the judges breakfast will be in future columns.

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

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Contest Entry

Oh no, it can't be INSV? Or can it?

By Jeannie Myers

Growing African violets since 2008 when I inherited ten plants from a dear friend who passed away, I've always viewed myself as an attentive and careful grower. I've bought the recommended books, read all the articles, and Googled for more information to become knowledgeable in my AV growing. I'm friends with Doctor Optimara. I've also learned a huge amount from AVSA and from Facebook groups including African Violet Buddies and African Violet Nerds. Many very experienced AV friends have appeared in my life at just the right time, and I'm hugely grateful to them.

While I don't consider myself to be growing for show, I have entered plants in two shows where my entries have earned a number of blue ribbons, a dozen rosettes, and one Runner-up to Best in Show. I mostly grow for personal pleasure and being 80% retired, I enjoy photographing my African violets and sharing the photographs with others.

In May 2013 while photographing my violets on an outdoor balcony, I discovered thrips on the purple bloom. I had not realized the risk I was taking and was shocked to get thrips! With advice from one of my knowledgeable AV friends, I religiously kept disbudding all thirty violets in that same room and treated them twice with Marathon granules. Two months later, voila – no more thrips!

Five months later I ordered a 'Concord' chimera from a small commercial seller. When the plant arrived with thrips, I knew exactly what to do: disbud, add two applications of Marathon granules, and keep it domed for two months. Again, no more thrips.

My collection hovers right around sixty varieties, which is a manageable number for me. I've resisted the urge to buy and trade for more violets than I am able to care for. I've never bought from big box stores because of their higher incidence of pests, and never bought a rescue plant. I haven't participated in any round robin swapping of leaves. Mostly I've bought and traded ONLY with experienced, well-known, reputable growers or a couple of the large commercial sellers. I've been passionate about limiting my collection and keeping it healthy.

In short, I've been very careful all along, attempting to avoid as many pest/virus risks as possible. That approach has awarded me considerable peace of mind and thriving plants. They've never had mites or soil mealies, and only those two very short bouts with thrips. Overall, I have been feeling quite confident as a plant mother and have willingly shared my knowledge, leaves and plants with others.

With many years of growing behind me, I developed a major fascination with unusual chimeras. Fortunately, several have been given to me by highly respected, successful growers, and these beautiful plants have thrived for me. As of August 2015, my collection of sixty-five African violets included ten happy chimeras.

Around that time I became aware of Stan Ko's beautiful chimera hybrids. They're not that easy to find in the United States, so imagine my excitement when a casual AV acquaintance from Facebook was willing to trade small suckers of 'Ko's Nightfall,' 'Ko's Misty Moon,' and the 'Japanese Suisei' (aka Marian Star Sport)! So I shipped off my small suckers of 'Victorian Flirt' and 'Harmony's Little Stinker' plus a few leaves, 'and awaited the arrival of my newly-traded treasures!

When the plants arrived in the hot month of August, they were worse for the wear. I had been told in advance that 'Suisei,' in particular, was tiny and weak, but I was confident I'd get it to thrive. See **photo #1** of the three

plants taken just two weeks after they arrived.

#1: 3 new plants

'Ko's Nightfall' was the strongest of the chimera babies and was isolated separately from the other two. It grew and thrived and bloomed beautifully and true. See **photo #2** of 'Ko's Nightfall' taken in late February 2016, six months after I received it. By the time I photographed its beautiful blooms, I had taken it out of isolation.

#2: Ko's Nightfall

I was concerned about the other two babies, though, and I was keeping a close watch on them. They were still isolated and partly domed beneath loose plastic bags. 'Suisei' remained a little weak and wobbly. Her older foliage was odd-colored with mottled shades of green, but her new foliage looked good. I assumed that she was still showing damage from the trauma of being shipped in hot August. The tiny chimera produced a few gorgeous, true blooms, and I felt excited by her progress. See **photos #3 and 4** of 'Suisei' taken on April 4, 2016.

#3: Suisei

#4: Suisei

By April 18, it was clear that 'Ko's Misty Moon' had grown two crowns where the original single crown had died. It appeared to have enough foliage and roots that I could divide it into two plants, so I did. I domed and kept them both

isolated. See **photo #5** of the newly separated twins.

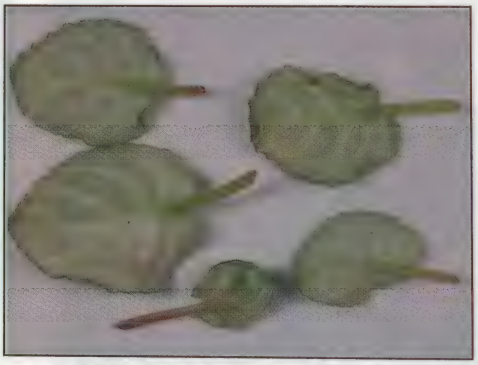
#5: Ko's Misty Moon 4/18/16

Finally, while watering my violets on May 14, it registered with me that these plants are SICK. Suddenly I knew that this is much more than shipping damage from 8 1/2 months ago. I wondered "*how could it take me so long to GET it*?" I searched Doctor Optimara and zeroed in on possible broad mites. The symptoms seemed to fit.

I shot some new photos and posted them on African Violet Buddies with my tale of woe and a plea for help. From my research, I believe these are likely infested with broad mites. Experts, do you think it's broad mites? If so, what kinds of treatments can I apply? These are all rare plants, so I can't just throw them away. See **photos #6, 7, and 8** that I posted on Facebook.

#6: Ko's Misty Moon 5/14/16

#7: Suisei fronts of leaves



#8: Suisei backs of leaves

One experienced grower replied: "You should be able to see broad mites. There's a lot wrong here. I'd be tempted to test for INSV."

Another wrote: "Jeannie, these do look suspicious. The mottling is a virus characteristic. If you want to keep them, test them. Agdia sells virus test kits."

I received lots of additional feedback, and one generous, kind grower volunteered to mail me three test kits for Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus (INSV). I removed a few leaves and kept those in separate baggies. I sprayed the plants for mites as recommended by two growers. When the INSV test kits arrived, I ran the tests on the leaves I had saved.

The test results? Positive!

Encountering INSV has been an upsetting emotional experience. In spite of all the care I took, all the precautions, all the safe practices I followed, STILL three of my newest plants were infected with INSV. I believe that the person who sent me these tiny infected chimeras had no idea anything was wrong with them. We have communicated since the positive INSV tests, and my AV acquaintance has seen no signs of plant illness but decided to disbud and spray everything with Forbid. (This person has now stopped sharing leaves and plants with others, so that is good news.)

From my research, I knew that INSV is not treatable, so I bagged these sick babies along with their pots, and trashed them. I've learned more about INSV, and at the end of this article I'll list some key points for your information. My list by no means covers everything. Look it up. Read articles about it. Do your research. Keep learning!

First, here are the precautions I am following and recommending to others. Will they keep you

or me from ever again encountering mites, mealies, thrips, INSV, etc? Of course not, but they'll REDUCE the risk.

1. LEARN all you can about potential pests and diseases so you're likely to recognize trouble before it spreads throughout your plants. If/when you spot a problem, don't panic, but isolate immediately. If you already know what to do, do it. If you're a new grower and you're in doubt, get advice from an experienced, successful grower.
2. Buy/acquire plants and leaves only from reputable commercial sellers or from respected, experienced growers. Ask if they use long isolation periods (at least 6 months) and tight pest/disease controls.
3. Don't buy plants from big box stores where good care is often lacking. If you do buy, please disbud and isolate for at least six months.
4. Some growers isolate and SPRAY all new plants, no matter where they get them. In the past I have isolated only, but in the future I'm planning to spray, also.
5. Limit your collection to a manageable size, so that you have the time and energy to be vigilant and notice any problems quickly.
6. Be aware of the risks associated with round robin leaf exchanges. Know that washing/soaking leaves in a 10% bleach solution may kill some pests, but not INSV.

Now, what's most important to know about INSV?

1. First and foremost, INSV is not treatable. If your plant tests positive, trash it. Likewise, trash leaves, suckers, or bloom stalks from that plant, as they will carry the virus.
2. If your plants test positive for INSV, they definitely do NOT have thrips, this means the new plant was probably infected before you received it. It's good to notify the seller (or trading partner), to help prevent further spread of the virus.
3. If your plants test positive, and you DO have thrips, there's a high likelihood that INSV has been transmitted by thrips to some of your other plants.
4. It is almost impossible to spread INSV from one plant to another on tools (not enough sap).
5. It's difficult to describe INSV symptoms because they vary a lot. However, you can suspect INSV when you see deformed and/or damaged foliage or blooms, multicolored ring spots on the foliage, and also mottled foliage. Look for extremely slow growth and failure to thrive, loss of crown and regrowth of a new deformed crown.
6. After receiving a new plant in the mail, keep a close eye on the foliage. There may be shipping damage on some of the leaves caused by extreme temperatures or packaging issues. During the isolation phase, pay attention to the new crown growth. Is it normal? Is it deformed? Is it discolored? If it doesn't look normal, be suspicious of pests or disease.
7. INSV test kits can be ordered from Agdia.com for around $5.00 each. These are generally effective provided your infected sample is large enough and diseased enough to produce sufficient virus titer. The tests are NOT generally effective when testing on plants that appear healthy and exhibit no diseased tissue.
8. According to Neil Lipson, a feature writer of *Technically Speaking... or Not* for the *African Violet Magazine,* INSV is spread exclusively by Western Flower Thrips (see Nov-Dec 2013 AVM issue). For more information about thrips and successful growing in general, see the many informative articles written by Neil Lipson and others in the *African Violet Magazine.*

I'm hopeful that my experience with INSV plus the contents of this article will prove useful to others. Growing African violets is such a wonderful, rewarding hobby, but it's vitally important to be and educate yourself. Good luck, and happy growing!

"And the winners are ..."

By Mary J. Corondan
434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

AVC OF BURLINGTON COUNTY, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Nostalgia, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Everlasting; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Orchard's Bumble Magnet, Precious Red; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Nostalgia; Best Semiminiature: Eternal Orbit; Best Miniature: Precious Red; Best Trailer: Foxwood Trail; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Sandy Skalski.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Heritage Frolic, Boo Man, Optimara Little Arapahoe; Best Species Collection: *S.* 6 clone *brevipilosa, S.* 5c1 clone Sigi Falls, *S.* 5b clone *magungensis*; Best Gesneriad: *Columnea orietadina*; Best Species: *S.* 5c1 clone Sigi Falls; Design Sweepstakes, **Susan Arnao.**

AVC OF GREATER ATLANTA, GA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Barbados, Optimara Modesty, Optimara Romance; Best Standard: Rhapsodie Ingrid; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Johnnie Berry.** Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Sticky Wicket, **Mark Jackson.** Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Tropical Knights', **Laveta Hilton.** Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *confusa* Mather E; Best Design, **Phillis Hinkle.** Design Sweepstakes (tie): **Johnnie Berry and Carol Brody.**

AVC OF OCALA, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Moon Craze, Definitely Darryl, Pink Pussycat; Best Semiminiature: Pink Pussycat, **Daniela Wyatt.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Galiwinku, Rob's Gundaroo, Rob's Vanilla Trail; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Galiwinku; Best Standard: Carribean Blue; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Aiko'; Best Design, **Carolee Carter.** Best Miniature: Jolly Fun, **Annette Harris.** Design Sweepstakes, **Sue Schwambach.**

AV & GESNERIAD SOCIETY OF ROCHESTER, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: B-Man's Caltanisetta, Lyon's Lavender Magic, Baker's Louise; Best Standard: B-Man's Caltanisetta; Best Miniature: Jolly Charm; Best Species: *S.* 5c1 clone House of Amani; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Donna LaDelia.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Austin's Smile, Frosted Brandy, Comfort Zone; Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Napoleon V', **Olive Ma Robinson.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's June Bug, Dolores' Sugar Candy, Jolly Orchid; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Galiwinku; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Boondoggle, **Ralph Robinson.** Best Design, **Barbara Festenstein.** Design Sweepstakes, **Gertrude Murphy.**

AV & GESNERIAD SOCIETY OF SYRACUSE, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Frozen in Time, Rhapsodie Clementine, Smooch Me; Best in Show/Best Standard: Frozen in Time, **Ann Kelly.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Creek, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Jolly Devil; Best Semiminiature: Kentucky Gooseberries; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Trailer: Teeny Bopper; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia iarae*, **Donna Coleman.** Best Species: *S.* 5cl clone *ionantha*, **Karen Dupree.** Best Design, **Lee Hoke.** Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Ryan.** Design Sweepstakes, **Penny Moore.**

AVS OF MINNESOTA, MN – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Clementine, Rhapsodie Rebecca, Optimara EverRejoice; Best in Show/Best Standard: Optimara EverRejoice, **Ken Rein.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Marching Band, Pink Dream, Frozen in Time; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Frosted Denim, Optimara Little Crystal, Optimara Little Rhodonite; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Scooter; Best Miniature: Frosted Denim; Best Trailer: Deer Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kathy Lahti.** Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Patina'; Design Sweepstakes, **Jude Neumann.** Best Species: *S.* 5f clone *ionantha* subsp. *orbicularis*, **Carol Semrau.** Best Design, **Rosemary Guhanick.**

AVC OF MORRIS COUNTY, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Jersey Snow Drops, Optimara EverGrace; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jersey Lilacs, Rob's Pink Buttercups, Rob's Dodo Bird; Best in Show/Best Standard: Jersey Snow Flakes; Best Miniature: Honey Blue Angel; Best Trailer: Jersey Fantasy Trail; Best Species: *S.* 5a clone *grandifolia* #299; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Kurzynski.** Best Semiminature: Rob's Pewter Bells, **Jody Brar.** Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Frosty Hills', **Jill Fisher.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Emilia Rykowski.**

AVS OF CANADA, ALBERTA – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Omaha, Morgan's Barossa, Mac's Misty Meadow; Best Semiminiature: Optimara Little Omaha, **Beverley Williams.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Ooey Goey, Rob's Antique Rose, Ness' Crinkle Blue; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Norma Kunzel.** Best in Show/Best Miniature: Imp's Blue Arsenic; Best Species: *S.* 3 clone *shumensis*, **Michael McLeod.** Best Standard: White Madonna, **Maureen Tkachuk.** Best Trailer, Mac's Northern Lights; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina bipinnatifida*, **Bill Price.** Best Design, **Paul Kroll.** Design Sweepstakes, **Robert Clark.**

AVS OF SPRINGFIELD, PA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara IsaBelle, Optimara AnnaBelle, Optimara Ontario; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Gundaroo, Rob's Boolaroo, Rob's Galiwinku; 2nd Best Species Collection: *S.* 5b clone *confusa*, *S. brevipilosa, S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*; Best in Show/Best Standard: Optimara Annabelle; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Miniature: Windsome; Best Trailer: Rolling Pink Cloudburst; Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Tiger Stripes'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Erica Geimonen.** Best Species Collection: *S. rupicola, S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha, S.* 5b clone *confusa*; Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *confusa,* **Alice Dulaney.** Best Design, **Barbara Jones.** Design Sweepstakes, **Joan Santino.**

ANNAPOLIS VALLEY AVS, NOVA SCOTIA – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Persian Prince, Aca's Pink Pet, Jolly Orchid; Best in Show/Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *grotei* sport; Best Standard, Gillian; Best Semiminiature: Beca's Zimbabwe; Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus humilis*, **Anne Brown.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Aca's Pink Pet, Jolly Orchid, Rob's Love Bite; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Karen Campbell.** Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid, **Debra Carey.** Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail, **Valerie Despres.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Patti Vaison.**

BAY STATE AVS, MA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wild Irish Rose, Amethyst, Red Sun Rising; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Boo Man, Shy Blue, Rob's Whippoorwill; Best Standard: Wild Irish Rose; Best Trailer: Marine Blue Lou, **Nancy Manozzi.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blushing Ivory, Silverglade Puffs, Buckeye Love's Caress, **Susan Gimblet.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Mac's Misty Meadow, Scamper, Lexi; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Celina Dark Velvet, **Holly Walker.** Best Miniature: Mickey Mouse; Best Species: *S. rupicola*, **Eleanor MacIver.** Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Suomi'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Larry Hoyle.** Best Design, **Cynthia Brooks.** Design Sweepstakes, **Carol Hess.**

BERGEN COUNTY AVS, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Leading Lady, Ian-Minuet, Park Avenue Blue; Horticulture and Design Sweepstakes, **Linda LoPresti.** Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Gundaroo; Best Standard: Red Rocket; Best Miniature: Wichita Baby; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Stardust', **Susan Gruben.** Best Design, **Lee Borey.**

CAPITAL DISTRICT AVS, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Woodland Sprite, September Affair, Tony's Blue Magic; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Planet Kid, Rob's Bad Bunny, Mac's Pure Poetry; Best in Show/Best Standard: September Affair; Best Semiminiature: Mac's Pure Poetry; Best Miniature: Lil Lovin; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Best Species: *S.* 5cl clone *tongwensis*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Margaret Califano.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Gator's Tail', **Heidi Dillenbeck.** Best Design, **Andrea Freeman.** Design Sweepstakes, **Maggie Schnurr.**

COLUMBUS AVS, OH – Winners: Best AVSA

Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Gillian, Rebel's Rose Bud; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Dear, Jolly Frills, Thunder Surprise; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rainbow's Regal Riot; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Frills; Best Trailer: Beauteous; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Martin.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Little Blue Bandit, Jolly Orchid, Rob's Jitterbug; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid, **Julie Jones.** Best Gesneriad: *Primulina dryas* 'Hisako', **Nancy Carr.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Gary Saunders.**

FIRST AUSTIN AVS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Muffy, Calico Queen, Apache Heartbeat; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Antique Rose, Von's Simple Simon, Ness' Mini Sota; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Susan Kautz.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rebel's Crested Robin, Christmas Candy-O, Irish Whisper; Best Standard: Christmas Candy-O, **Kathy Brewster.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Creek, Hector, Classic Rock; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Hector; Best Miniature: Everdina, **Penny Smith-Kerker.** Best Trailer: Pixie Blue; Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *confusa*, **Dolores Gibbs.** Best Gesneriad: *Nautilocalyx pemphidius*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Glenda Williams.**

GARDEN STATE AVC, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion, Buckeye Seductress, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion, **Michele Gazzara.** Best Species Collection: *S.* 5b clone *confusa* Mather E, *S.* 8 clone Cha Simba, *S.* 8 clone *rupicola*; Best Species: *S.* 8 clone Cha Simba, **Grace Egan.** Best Semiminiature: Mere Magnificence; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **George McDonald.** Best Miniature: Frosted Denim, **Jan Murasko.** Best Trailer: Pixie Blue; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Aiko', **Tim Ferguson.** Best Design, **Frankie Bal.** Design Sweepstakes, **Grace Rarich.**

LAKESHORE AVS, ONTARIO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Spring Kiss, Cajun's Queen Lace, Tony's Blue Magic; Best Standard: Tony's Blue Magic, **Bruce Williams.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Calypso Beat, Jolly Eyes; Best Miniature: Little Bo Peep; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Harlequin Lace', **Brett Flewelling.** Best Species Collection: *S. shumensis, S.* clone *diplotricha* Parker, *S.* clone *diplotricha* Uppsala 3084; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Optimara Little Omaha; Best Species: *S.* clone *diplotricha* Parker; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Beverley Williams.** Best Trailer: Jersey Fantasy Trail, **Bill Price.** Best Design, **Judy Zinni.** Design Sweepstakes, **Steven Kerr.**

MAGIC KNIGHT AVC, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Snehnyi Edelveis, Scandal, Nancy Reagan; Best in Show/Best Standard: Snezhnyi Edelveis; Best Trailer: Rena Enisel, **Dale Parker.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Calypso Beat, Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Jolly Butterfuly; Best Miniature: Jolly Apollo; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ken Froboese.** Best Species Collection: *S.* 5c2 clone *diplotricha* Punter #0, *S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, *S.* 5c1 clone Sigi Falls; Best Species: *S.* 5c1 clone Sigi Falls, **Steven Spachek.** Best Semiminiature: Ness' Satin Rose, **Marie Miller.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Raydar's Sassy', **Dorcas Brashear.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Jane Rexilius.**

MEMPHIS AVS, TN – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Beloved, Buckeye Cherry Freckles, Frozen in Time; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Dean's Cupid, Rob's Pink Buttercups; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Colossal; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fuddy Duddy; Best Miniature: Jolly Joy; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Brenda Brasfield.** Best Trailer: Rob's Gundaroo; Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *confusa*, **Beth Baker.** Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea* 'Kerii'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Geneva Stagg.**

METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS AV COUNCIL, MO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Tiger, Cajun's Slow Dance, Buckeye Serenity; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Satin Rose, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Slap Happy; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Precious Red; Best Standard: Cajun's Slow Dance; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Trailer: Rob's Galiwinku; Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Temptation'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Sue Melson.** 2nd Best AVSA Stan-

dard Collection: Cajun's Fair Maiden, Smooch Me, Optimara California II; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Thunder Surprise, Jolly Butterfly, Rob's Scooter; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Fran Russom.** Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Linda Sumski.**

NAGATONIC AVS, CT – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Maine II, Optimara Van Gogh, Optimara myJoy; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Thunder Surprise, Mac's Callow Fellow, Cupid's Jewel; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Standard: Optimara Van Gogh; Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Best Miniature: Honey Blue Angel; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Edna Rourke.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Argyle Socks, Rob's Delicious, Munchkin Kisses, **Roger Wheeler.** Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'White Sprite', **Donna Presnell.**

OMAHA AV & GESNERIAD SOCIETY, NE – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Nostalgia, Santee Sioux, Wisdom; Best in Show/Best Standard: Jack of Clubs; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kent Stork.** Best Semiminiature: Rob's Boogie Woogie; Best Miniature: Jolly Blue Clouds; Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Bud's Autumn Embers', **Brandon Erikson.** Best Trailer: Senk's Longlegs, **Debra Ernst.** Best Species: *S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, **Barb Bures.** Best Design, **Randy Deutsch.** Design Sweepstakes, **Claude Smith.**

OSHKOSH VS, WI – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Strawberry Spinner, Ma's Wicked Witch; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Blue Clouds, Morgan's Declan Duff; Rob's Chilly Willy; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Jolly Blue Clouds; Best Standard: Ma's Wicked Witch; Best Semiminiature: Cajun's Lil Sprinkles; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Ozark's Rosy Cheeks'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cool Blue, Slow Dancin', Jolly Dear, **Betsy Fox.** Best Species Collection: *S.* 8 clone Cha Simba, *S.* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, *S.* 8 clone *rupicola*; Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Marty Anderson.** Best Trailer: Rob's Lilli Pilli, **Cathy Heider.** Best Design, **Mary Shellman.** Design Sweepstakes, **Ruth Mengsol.**

RICHMOND AVS, VA – Winners: Best in Show/Best Standard: Newtown Quiet Resolve; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Barbara Greenawalt.** Best Semiminiature: Rob's Pewter Bells, **Barbara Kosko.** Best Miniature: Precious Red; Design Sweepstakes, **Sharon Long.** Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Deep Purple Dreaming', **Barbara Stewart.** Best Design, **Vicki Carr.**

SEATTLE AVS, WA – Winners: Best in Show/Best Species: *S.* clone *orbicularis*; Best Standard: Ness' Dream Maker; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Clark.** Best Semiminiature: Green Dragon, **Cathleen Graves.** Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo, **Juanita Loder.** Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea* 'Keystone's Bantam', **Jean Chin.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Pat Shandrow.**

SHO-ME AVC, MO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Santee Sioux, Cajun's Delicate Touch, Cajun's Slow Dance; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cajun's Lil Joy, Rob's Inner Orbit, Rob's Dodo Bird; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Hug Me Honey; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Inner Orbit; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Lynn Canning.** Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail, **Karen Carlson-Cook.** Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *grotei* Mather No. 21, **Lavonne Ridder.** Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea* 'Shortnin' Bread'; Design Sweepstakes, **Linda Hall.** Best Design, **Sharon Vantuyl.**

SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY AVC, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rebel's Minnesota Haze, Rebel's Restless Heart, Park Avenue Blue; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Bed Bug, Rob's Oolong, Rob's Astro Zombie; Best in Show/Best Standard: Jersey Snow Drops; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Oolong; Best Miniature: Gleeful Elf; Best Trailer: Tiny Moon Goddess; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Donna Brining.** Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Temptation', **Barbara Steinruck.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Elmer Godeny.**

SUNDOWNERS AVS, LA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Zydeco, Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion, Cajun's Two to Tango; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Zydeco; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Belinda Thibodeaux.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Outer Orbit, Rob's Dust Storm, Rob's Peedletuck; Best Semiminiature:

Rob's Outer Orbit; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug, **Laura Moser.** Best Species Collection: *S.* 5c2 clone *diplotricha* Punter #0, *S.* 5c1 clone *tongwensis, S.* 5b clone *confusa*; Best Trailer: Senk's Fruit Fly; Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *confusa*, **Wilhelmina Allen**. Best Gesneriad: *Nematanthus* 'Black Gold', **Robbie McMeel.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Susie Smith.**

SWEET WATER AVS, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Harbor Blue, Optimara Martinique; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Devil, Jolly Jam, Cranberry Night; Best in Show/Best Standard: Harbor Blue; Best Miniature: Precious Red; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *confusa*; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Carolyn Klein.** Best Semiminiature: Rob's Delicious, **Jeanne Damaso.** Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Silver Skies', **Joan Verschure.**

THOUSAND OAKS AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Sno Fun, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Irish Flirt; Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail, **Ann Wang.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Jubilee, Blue Scoundrel, Rob's Lucky Number; Best Species Collection: *S.* 5b clone *confusa*, *S.* 5c1 clone House of Amani, *S.* 5f clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*; Best in Show/Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *confusa*; Best Semiminiature: Irish Nights; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Jimmies'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Maureen Pratt.** Best Standard: Painted Desert, **Gay Wilson.** Best Design, **Ryan Morris.** Design Sweepstakes, **Judy Anderson.**

TIDEWATER AVS, VA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Powwow, Edge of Darkness, Picasso, **Linda Stinnette.** Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Destiny', **LaDonna Hopson.** Best Standard: Smooch Me; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug, **Nancy Weller.** Best Trailer: Lady Trail; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Pat Knight.** Best Species: *S.* 5c2 clone *diplotricha* Parker, **Norma Griswold**.

TUCSON AVS, AZ – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Satin Rose, Jolly Frills, Mac's Misty Meadow; Best Species Collection: *S.* 8 clone *rupicola*, *S.* 5g clone *pendula*, *S.* 5b clone *confusa*; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Antique Rose; Best Trailer: Dresden Doll; Best Species: *S.* 5b clone *confusa*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Judy Millstone.** Best in Show/Best Standard: Fisherman's Paradise; Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Napoleon V', **Kathy Bell.** Best Miniature: Windsome, **Gloria Williams**. Best Design, **Sheila Wood.** Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Fuller.**

WINDSOR AVS, CT – Winners: Best in Show/Best Standard: Rainbow's Quiet Riot, **Pamela Veley.** Best Semiminiature: Rob's Dandy Lion; Best Miniature: Pink Dove, **Charlotte Howson.** Best Trailer: Ruth's Girl; Best Design, **Cindy Fagan.** Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia leucotricha,* **Gloria Cooke.** Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Janice Boyko.** Design Sweepstakes, **Angela Comer.**

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS

Thumbprint (Under $25)

Geneva ($100-$499)

Two Tone ($25-$49)

Fantasy ($500-$999)

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Chimera (Over-$1000)

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Episcia 'Pink Panther'

Exhibited by: ***Penny Smith-Kerker***

Contest Entry

Believe It Or Not: A Different Watering Method

By Paul Kroll

I chuckle at the articles that are written and published in the AVM which espouse the wick-watering method as if there were no other! So many articles just assume that EVERYONE uses the wicking method. Not so!

I tried wicking, but I like to handle my plants often: turning, grooming, examining, etc. and I often would not get the wick reinserted in its proper place, resulting in the stoppage of the wicking and a "hydrologically challenged" plant!

I observed and envied the plants I saw exhibited by so many of my Canadian friends and decided to emulate their methods. It is an easy way to water and works for me, just as other methods work for others.

Each plant has a saucer an inch larger than the pot dimension: a 2 1/4 or 2 1/2 inch pot gets a 3 inch saucer; a 3 inch pot gets a 4 inch saucer and a 4 inch pot gets a 5 inch saucer, etc. etc. I do use trays underneath very small plants with baby plantlets, flooding the tray with water. Adding water to the saucer or tray allows the plants to get what they want or need and then I dump off the excess in about an hour. Occasionally, I need to put a bit of water on the surface of the soil as well as filling the saucer, if the plant is drinking heavily at that time. You get to know your plants and the various stages of their growth and/or blooming habits. We all know that a blooming plant requires more water than one not blooming.

The Canadian growers whose plants I envied also use the Fisher's Mix soil. After trying that, I found it too heavy for most of my plants, so I amended it with more vermiculite and perlite as well as milled sphagnum moss. This soil seems to work very well for me and allows me to water once a week as opposed to every four days, as the Canadian growers do.

Of course, each grower needs to find what works for them individually and not follow any other grower's schedule for watering, soil mixes, etc. Experiment on a few of your plants and see what works best for you!

In order to water my extensive collection of plants, I use a fountain pump, which is a submersible water pump, and I have attached a twenty-foot long hose and a hand-grip nozzle at the end. Most of my friends who use these implements choose to use clear plastic hose. I found that the algae forming in the hose was unsightly, and switched to a black, fuel-line hose available in auto parts stores.

Squeezing the wand's handgrip allows the water to be delivered exactly where I want it and to shut off immediately afterward. (See the photo of the pump and "wand.") I use a pail with a capacity of six US gallons. I add my fertilizer and anything else I plan to mix in that week, and then carry two-gallon pails to fill the larger one. In this way, I can control the temperature of the water delivered to my plants and the amounts, etc.

I have my shelves set up with egg crating atop trays below, and I can dump off the excess water into those trays below resulting in added humidity as that water evaporates. I use a turkey baster to suck out the excess water from the trays that are holding the smaller plants. It works fine! I dump the pails of "used" water onto the outdoor plants and it does not go to waste.

Although the expense of the fountain pump, tubing, and wand is an initial cost, I have used mine for many years and perhaps the cost balances out with the cost of the reservoirs and all that is needed for the wick watering method. Perhaps wick watering is not working for you or has not produced the desired results. You may want to give this method a try. Good luck with it.

K's Pinkitini

Hybridized and Photographed by:
Kathy Hajner

"The Reclassification of Saintpaulia - An interview with Michael Möeller"

By Winston J. Goretsky

In conjunction with the 80th Anniversary of the Guangxi Institute of Botany, Guilin, China, I had the privilege of attending the International Conference on Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Use of Tropical and Subtropical Plants, November 2015, where I was able to meet Michael Möeller.

In the past, I had followed Michael's work and was excited to be able to meet him in person, along with many other prominent botanists, who were all so very eager to share their knowledge and wisdom.

Michael shared the news about the recent classification which has synonymized *Saintpaulia* with *Streptocarpus* and noted that the publication was scheduled for release in December 2015. Since that time, there have been many questions raised and comments made about what this all means to our "African Violet" world.

Michael was kind enough to participate in a Question and Answer style of interview, which I hope will be helpful in shedding some light on the new classification and taxonomy.

Winston Goretsky, Michael Möeller, and Bill Price

The following are the questions that I posed and the responses from Michael Möeller:

Q: Could you provide some details on what were the main determining factors in re-classifying *Saintpaulia* that would be helpful in explaining this to our members.

A: Apart from the obvious, molecular analysis shows that they have evolved from within part of *Streptocarpus*. *Saintpaulia* shares a range of other character with *Streptocarpus*:

- Like all other taxa of *Streptocarpus* subgenus Streptocarpella they have a base chromosome number of 15.
- Some early ancestors within *Saintpaulia* such as *goetzeanus* and *ulugurensis* have leaves in opposite pairs with long internodes and semierect habit that resembles some Madagascan *Streptocarpus* species like *levis* or *muscosus*.
- They share straight short globose-ovoid capsules with Acanthonema.
- They also share a rosette habit and spiral leaf arrangement with other Madagascan species such as *andohahelensis*.

Q: If you could please reference the 10 species that are formally recognized as most of the members are familiar with the reduction from around 20 species to 9 and may be unaware of the 10th species that forms the group.

A: Below are the entities we have recognized in **section** *Saintpaulia*. Note that rupicola is now regarded as a subspecies of ionanthus. I know they are somewhat different from the rest, but are part of the evolutionary lineage that gave rise to the ionanthus complex. If one would throw a lot of molecular matter at the complex, perhaps one could show that they are more distinct...

- sect. *Saintpaulia* (H. Wendl.) Mich.Möeller & Haston, comb. & stat. nov.
- *Streptocarpus* afroviola Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* brevipilosus (B.L.Burtt) Mich.Möeller & Haston, comb. nov.
- *Streptocarpus* goetzeanus (Engl.) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* inconspicuus (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus (H.Wendl.) Christenh. subsp. ionanthus var. ionanthus *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. grandifolius (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. grotei (Engl.) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. ionanthus var. diplotrichus (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. mafiensis (I.Darbysh. & Pócs) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. occidentalis (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. orbicularis (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. pendulus (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. rupicolus (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ionanthus subsp. velutinus (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* nitidus (B.L.Burtt) Mich. Möeller & Haston, comb. nov.
- *Streptocarpus* shumensis (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* teitensis (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.
- *Streptocarpus* ulugurensis (Haston) Haston, comb. nov.
- *Streptocarpus* watkinsii (Haston) Haston, comb. nov.

The latter two are recently described species.

Q: I understand that this re-classification is the result of genetic/DNA analysis and compares what is known and sequences samples accordingly. *Saintpaulia* was thought to be a genus for a long time now. What new discovery or technique has been developed or identified, that has allowed this new classification to differentiate the previously known genus from its position in the tree?

A: What I think might help out is this:

- As far as I know, *Saintpaulia* never was placed in a tree, but from our first trees in 1997 based on neutrally evolving molecules the '*Saintpaulia*' species were shown closest related to African *Streptocarpus* species with caulescent habit tubular corollas and twisted fruits. These strep species came from the same area (Tanzania) as the '*Saintpaulias*'. More primitive species occur on higher mountains of the Eastern Arc and have retained a +/- caulescent habit (e.g. goetzeana from the Ulugurus). It is likely that here, the flower tubes shortened and flattened to attract more generalist pollinators perhaps as a consequence of pollinator scarcity in higher altitudes. The fruit became shorter perhaps as a side effect and eventually too short to retain a twist. The rosette '*Saintpaulia*' species have evolved from the caulescent ones while migrating downhill occupying the lower and warmer Usambara mountains and environs. This has happened relatively recent and the species are not yet diversified to the extent to call each a separate species and hence form the ionantha complex.
- This is the story of the evolution of '*Saintpaulia*' from a caulescent *Streptocarpus* of subgenus Streptocarpella, and to reflect relatedness in our taxonomic system, they had to be included in *Streptocarpus*. The alternative to split streps into 12 genera was not tenable because the morphological differences between sections is not significant enough.
- At the heart of our work are really molecules and their change over time in their descendants. Molecular phylogenetic techniques can detect the patterns of changes and phylogenetic trees depict the natural relatedness of species. This really took off around the 1990s when the first molecular-based studies came out.

Q: As a Society, what impact does this have on the way we present our information? What would be an example of a fully described *Saintpaulia* species?

A: There is not much that needs to be done differently from previous work I guess, only for '*Saintpaulia*' to be recognized under *Streptocarpus*, and here in subgenus Streptocarpella and section *Saintpaulia*.

Q: Currently we have the following description:
S. ionantha subspecies ionantha variety ionantha clone ionantha

A: New: It would be described:
Streptocarpus ionanthus (H.Wendl.) Christenh. subsp. ionanthus var. ionanthus clone ionanthus

From the publication: **TAXON** 64 (6) • December 2015: 1243–1274, the following summary describes section "g" as outlined in the publication:

("g") sect. *Saintpaulia* (H. Wendl.) Mich.Möeller & Haston, comb. & stat. nov.

Streptocarpus afroviola Christenh.

Streptocarpus brevipilosus (B.L.Burtt) Mich.Möeller & Haston, comb. nov.

Streptocarpus goetzeanus (Engl.) Christenh.

Streptocarpus inconspicuus (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus (H.Wendl.) Christenh. subsp. ***Ionanthus*** var. ***ionanthus***

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *grandifolius* (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *grotei* (Engl.) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *ionanthus* var. *diplotrichus* (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *mafiensis* (I.Darbysh. & Pócs) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *occidentalis* (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *orbicularis* (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *pendulus* (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *rupicolus* (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ionanthus subsp. *velutinus* (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus nitidus (B.L.Burtt) Mich.Möeller & Haston, comb. nov.

Streptocarpus shumensis (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus teitensis (B.L.Burtt) Christenh.

Streptocarpus ulugurensis (Haston) Haston, comb. nov.

Streptocarpus watkinsii (Haston) Haston, comb. nov.

Through my correspondence with Dr. Janet Cubey (Royal Horticultural Society), she has stated the following:

> "On behalf of the ISHS Special Commission for Cultivar Registration, I can reassure you that we would be delighted for the African Violet Society of America to continue as the International Cultivar Registration Authority for the genus/subgenus *Saintpaulia.*
>
> My colleague, Dr. Alan Leslie, and I will consider what changes of wording may be required.
>
> We will also discuss, with the members of the Special Commission, whether it would be appropriate to set up subgenus *Saintpaulia* as a Special Denomination Class. If this was done, it would mean that cultivar epithets would only have to be distinct within *Streptocarpus* subgenus *Saintpaulia*, rather than across the whole of *Streptocarpus* sensu lato.
>
> One of us will be in touch again, once these discussions have taken place."

As much as I would like to say, ***"Well, there we have it!!"*** the final conclusion to this story is not yet written. I do hope this provides you with a little insight into the fascinating world of botanical nomenclature and taxonomy.

Once a final decision has been communicated, a follow-up to this reclassification will be made and at that point, we can begin to take the steps of updating our literature and publications accordingly.

It is important to note, however, that the diversity of our existing named species should be preserved, regardless of the reclassification, as they represent a wide range in variation. Keep your labels the way you have been recording them, in order to properly distinguish them, so that they can be identified as they were originally named.

Happy growing...

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Nortex's Snowkist Haven

Exhibited by: ***Richard Nicholas***

Hybridized by: ***Nortex/B. Johnson***

Standard

Violet Lights and Stands

By Steve Harris

This article is directed at the novice and intermediate grower. It will, with your help, show the novice how to build stands, or light a minimum number of plants at a minimum expense. It will be used to show any unusual ways that help you with this. I am asking that *you* send a description and photos of the ways that you light your plants. This could lead to a series on lighting for the AVM. I will start the series by showing what I have done for my wife who is a fairly serious grower.

I built her stands out of commercial shelving that is available at any of the home improvement stores (Lowes™ or Home Depot™). The shelves are four feet long and two feet deep. I used a standard 4-foot shop light, and mounted two of them to the bottom of each shelf. I had to redirect the power cord to come out of the side of the light instead of end. I used a power strip to plug the four lights on the top two shelves, and a different power strip to plug in the bottom two shelves. These were then plugged into timers that allow you to control the hours that you light your plants.

I added one special touch to the bottom shelf on each stand. This "extra" is that I made the bottom shelf pull out, so that she can work on the plants without having to get down low or on the floor. (This was done because we are getting older and our backs don't work as well as when we were younger.)

This was accomplished in the following way:

I used two, 2'x2' by 3/8" sheets of plywood that allow you to make two moveable shelves on the bottom shelf. I used two, twenty-two inch, "full extension drawer slides" on each sheet of plywood. The drawer slides were laid down horizontally, and screwed to the plywood. Be sure that they are parallel to each other. The other side of the drawer slide was screwed to the bottom shelf. This allows the bottom shelf to be pulled out most of the way.

Below, I have provided a cost breakdown of the material that is required.

Item	Quantity required	Cost each/ total cost
Shelving	1	$95.00 / $95.00
Shop light	8	$12.00 / $96.00
Power strip	2	$10.00 / $20.00
Timer	2	$7.50 / $15.00
		Total $226.00
	Movable shelf	
2'x 2' x 3/8" plywood	2	$7.50 / $15.00
22" Full extension drawer Slide	4	$18.00 / $72.00
		Total $87.00

I have also included a photo to allow you to see the finished product.

We would like to see more articles showing how novice growers provide light to their plants. It would be very helpful to share with the new growers, information on how to light just a few plants.

Your ideas would be greatly appreciated. Please send descriptions and photo's to the AVM Editor, Ruth Rumsey. Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net, or 2375 North St. Beaumont, TX 77702.

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Streptocarpus 'Emily'

Exhibited by: ***Elaine Niece***

C2 Violet

By Katherine Read

My Mother gave me some African violet seedlings, and I was curious as to what I received.

When one of the plants flowered in the morning, the blooms were simple single, plain, light pink flowers, as well as a flower dropper. The flowers looked like those on a *Saintpaulia* species.

First photo

The first blossom did not look like a single, but all the others after it have been single flowers. Later that evening I checked on the plant again and that flower had closed to a bell shape. The next morning the flower opened up, and in the evening, closed again after sundown. The following day I took pictures to document the flower with my phone. (It is not the best smart phone.) I then waited for more flowers to open, hoping to see if it was just one flower that closed at sundown, or if the pattern continued with all the flowers that opened.

Indeed, the pattern did continue with all the other flowers. I noticed that it happens more in the younger blossoms and after one has been open for about seven days, there is little, to no change, in that blossom in the evening.

I have noticed the plant likes to be keep moist. The method I use with the plants is wick watering. Unlike other African violets, if this plant is goes dry, it takes much longer to recover. The plant is sensitive to environmental changes. I have learned this from personal experience. The plant's grandparents are *'Ness' Fantasy Gold'* and *Saintpaulia ionantha*; then a seedling was self-pollinated to get this plant.

Morning

Evening

Evening

Evening

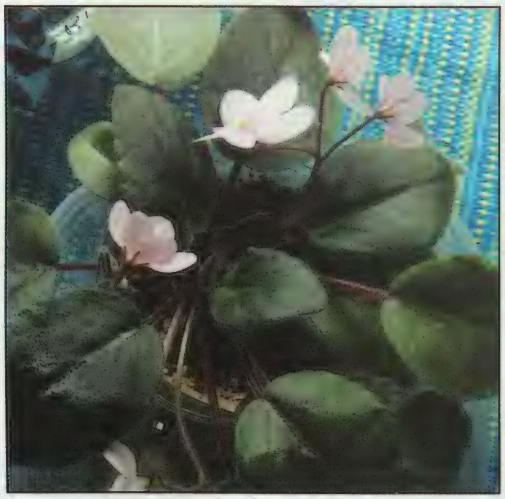
Second Generation Morning

Second Generation Morning

Second Generation Evening

Second Generation Evening

Third Generation Morning



Third Generation Evening

Third Generation Evening

Katherine and Sarah Reed

Kohleria 'Rongo'

Exhibited by:
Dodie Nelson

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Little Axel

Exhibited by:
Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by:
Anthoflores
Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Winston Goretsky**

LE-Karusel

Exhibited by: ***Donna Turner***

Hybridized by: ***E. Lebetskaia***

Standard

AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC
COMBINED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2015

ASSETS:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	$	60,108.96
Investments		106,926.02
Inventories		8,470.72
Prepaid Expenses		2,500.00
Restricted Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents		16,224.68
Investments		139,701.01
Capital Assets:		
Land		10,000.00
Other Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation		35,412.01
TOTAL ASSETS		379,343.40
LIABILITIES :		
Accrued Payroll Taxes Payable		1,564.44
Sales Taxes Payable		285.00
Deferred Revenue		135,233.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES		137,082.44
NET ASSETS:		
Net Investment in Capital Assets		45,412.01
Temporarily Restricted		23,360.42
Permanently Restricted		131,887.32
Unrestricted		41,601.21
TOTAL NET ASSETS	$	242,260.96

Award Donations Needed

Would you like to participate in the Orlando Convention in 2017? Here is your opportunity. We are accepting donations for awards for the convention. If you go out to our website *avsa.org* under **Conventions**, you can see what awards have already been donated for the 2017 Orlando Convention. You can make your donation for a specific variety, or leave your award donation undesignated and it will be applied where needed.

There are three (2) ways you can donate an award. One is with your registration for the convention in 2017, or you can send a check to the AVSA Office, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702. Please make checks payable to AVSA and designate *for Orlando Convention awards.*

We appreciate ***all*** awards donated by societies and individuals that support our convention show. If you should have any questions, you may contact me at linda.hall6641@hotmail.com.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

June 4, 2016 • Albuquerque, New Mexico

The Annual meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was called to order by Third Vice President, Susan Anderson, at 3:15 p.m. in the Rio Grande Ballroom of the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the flag were led by Marge Savage. Susan Anderson introduced the officers and presented the President, Winston Goretsky.

Mary Corondan, Secretary, reported a quorum was present.

Mary Corondan, Secretary, read the Standing Rules for the Annual Meeting, and they were adopted. A copy is attached to these minutes.

President Goretsky appointed Susan Hill, Chair; Paula Bal and Leonard Re to approve the 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes. Bob Clark was appointed Time Keeper. Anne Nicholas, Chair; Kathy Bell and Cindi Nofziger were appointed Tellers. Paula Bal reported the minutes of the 2015 Annual Meeting were approved.

Laurene Jones, Resolutions Chair, presented the Courtesy Resolution, which is attached. The Resolution was adopted.

The proposed Bylaw Amendments, printed in the March/April 2016 African Violet Magazine, were presented. There being no objection, these were projected on the screen and considered by Article and Section. Article IV, Section 1, as to the elected officers, was then opened for debate.

Dr. Richard Nicholas made a motion to amend Article IV, Section 1, paragraph 6, as to the treasurer, by striking the word "weekly" and inserting "monthly" and that we add the following sentence to that paragraph: "Additional duties and responsibilities of the Treasurer are listed in the AVSA Policies and Procedures Manual." And further, that we transfer all of the bulleted items in Article IV, Section 1, Paragraph 6, to the Policies and Procedures Manual." (Motion 1) The motion was duly seconded and was adopted.

Article VII, Section 4, was considered. Susan Anderson moved to amend Article VII, Section 4, Employees, 1. **Office Manager**, so paragraph 1 a., b. and c. would read as follows:

1. Office Manager, whose duties shall include but not be limited to:
   a. The day-to-day responsibility for financial matters, including receipt and deposit of funds, payment of bills and salaries, and bookkeeping; and
   b. Reporting monthly to the Treasurer, the President and the Finance Chair.
   c. Additional duties and responsibilities of the Office Manager are listed in the AVSA Policies and Procedures Manual.

And further, that the detailed items which were listed in "letters a through o" be transferred to the Policies and Procedures Manual. (Motion 2) The motion was seconded and approved.

The Bylaw Amendment for Article VIII, Executive Committee, was considered as published in the March/April 2016 issue of the African Violet Magazine. The amendment was adopted as printed.

Cindi Nofziger from the Nominating Committee submitted the following nominees to serve as Directors: Johnnie Berry from Georgia, Julie Jones from Ohio, Lynn Lombard from Washington, Dr. Bill Price from Canada and Linda Rowe from New York. The motion was made and seconded to close nominations from the floor. The Directors were elected by voice vote. President Goretsky announced these Directors will be installed at the banquet this evening.

President Goretsky recognized the retiring Directors: Bob Clark, Mary Lou Harden, Susan Hill, Lorna Russell and Joan Santino. Also recognized as retiring were Shirley Berger, Booster Fund;

Marlene Buck, Boyce Edens Research Fund; Barbara Elkin, Vintage Violet; Elmer Godeny, Convention Show Awards; Diane Miller, Nominating Committee; Marge Savage, Society Awards and Lynne Wilson, Publications Committee.

Joyce Stork presented the annual membership rebate to Violet Barn for obtaining 48 new AVSA members.

Laurene Jones presented the "Lest We Forget" list commemorating members who are no longer with us.

Linda Price, Orlando Convention Chair, extended an invitation to attend the 2017 Annual Convention in Orlando Florida, May 28-June 4, 2017. It will be the 71st AVSA Convention.

Announcements were made regarding missing items that had been turned in. Kathy Bell stated that students from the university would be collecting blossoms for research. When disbudding show plants, leave the name card by the blossoms so the students could collect them by variety name.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Mary Corondan

_____

COMMITTEE TO APPROVE

_____

Susan K. Hill, Chair

_____

Paula Bal

_____

Leonard Re

AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.
Annual Membership Meeting
STANDING RULES

1. All remarks shall be addressed to the chair.
2. Members rising to make motions or debate shall step up to the microphone and state their names.
3. Debate shall be limited to two (2) minutes for each speaker.
4. Main motions and amendments longer than a few words shall be written on one of the special forms for this purpose and given to the chair.
5. Substantive motions shall be voted on by written ballot.
6. All electronic devices should be set on silent during the meeting.
7. When nominations are made from the floor for an officer or director, a two (2) minute nominating speech for each candidate will be permitted.
8. In the event there is more than one (1) candidate for an office, and a majority is not achieved by any candidate on the first ballot, the two candidates with the highest number of votes shall be the candidate for the second ballot.
9. In the event of a ballot vote, the doors to the room shall be closed and no one shall enter or exit the room during the counting of the ballots except the Teller Committee.

Courtesy Resolution
AVSA Annual Convention
June 4, 2016

Whereas The African Violet Society of America Inc. is holding its seventieth convention and show at the Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque,

Whereas Instruction, motivation and good will have been provided by our hosts and AVSA committees,

Resolved that the highest commendation and gratitude be given to our hosts the Albuquerque African Violet Club for efficiently planning and coordinating the entire convention.

To convention director Kathy Lahti and her committee and Ian Isadoro and the staff of the hotel who have provided us with a week filled with learning, sharing and fun, and to members and visitors who by their presence have added the fellowship that has made this convention such a pleasant experience;

To convention chair Sharon Shannon and convention show chair Kathy Bell and co-chair Kathy Hajner whose leadership provided organization and beauty to the convention and show;

To Al and Karen Cenci, Presentation chairs, for excellent attention to all the special needs of the convention;

To Convention Tour Chairs Steve and Donna Turner for managing the tours and the local tour committee for selecting outstanding tours;

To Bill Foster, AVSA Shows and Judges Chairman, consultants, judges and clerks for providing careful consideration of the merits of exhibits;

To Linda Hall for stepping in and assuming the chairmanship of the Show Awards committee and to her and her committee for their efforts in securing awards to recognize the artistic and horticultural accomplishments displayed in the show and Marge Savage to those who provide superior service to the African Violet Society of America;

To the AVSA commercial members whose research and knowledge have provided plants for all violet growers;

To those experts in African violet growing and showing who are willing to share their knowledge and expertise in workshops at the convention;

To all members of AVSA who contributed time, energy and ability to make the convention successful in any way;

To the Executive Committee, Board of Directors and all related committees of the African Violet Society of America for performing their duties during the year;

To Past Presidents of AVSA in attendance for their support and continuous service to AVSA;

To Edna Rourke for organizing the Auction Luncheon for the last seventeen conventions;

To Amy Carruth for her continuing support in registering members and setting up the registration desk;

To Ruth Rumsey, editor of the AVM. For her time and expertise in producing our magazine;

To Shirley Berger for her many years of service as she steps down from the Booster Fund chairmanship;

To Marlene Buck who has resigned as chair of the Boyce Edens Research Fund after 30 Years;

To retiring directors Bob Clark, Mary Lou Harden, Susan K. Hill, Lorna Russell, and Joan Santino for their service the past three years;

To the management of the Crowne Plaza and the entire staff of the hotel for their courteous attention to the needs of those attending the convention;

Therefore be it resolved:

That a copy of this resolution be made a part of the minutes of this convention.

Laurene Jones, Chairman

LEST WE FORGET
2015-2016

Jim Bodnar . . . . . Ontario
Catherine Boxberger . . . . . FL
Pat Couture . . . . . MA
Heather Demers. . . . . Nova Scotia
Margaret Duffy . . . . . PA
Greta Durand . . . . . Quebec
Alex Early . . . . . TX
Barbara Entrekin . . . . . GA
Eric Hamilton. . . . . Ontario
Patt Harris . . . . . CA
Sue Hill . . . . . MO
Thad Holcomb . . . . . NV
Hans Inpijn. . . . . CA
Caren Lilliquist . . . . . CA
Sam McKenna . . . . . CA
Leona Mae Mendes. . . . . CA
Nesi Mendes . . . . . CA
Darlene Palmer . . . . . Nova Scotia
Elaine Re . . . . . CA
Ouida Smestad. . . . . MN
Jean Stanford. . . . . Nova Scotia
Joyce Stenger . . . . . TX
Edith Van Tilburg . . . . . IA
Martha Turner. . . . . TX
Irwin Wagman . . . . . NY
Martha Walker . . . . . AR
Wayne Watt . . . . . IA

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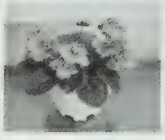

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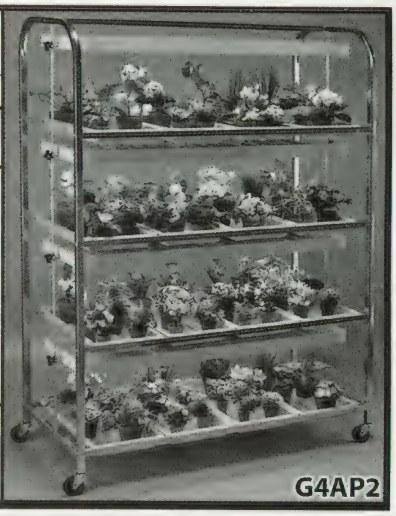
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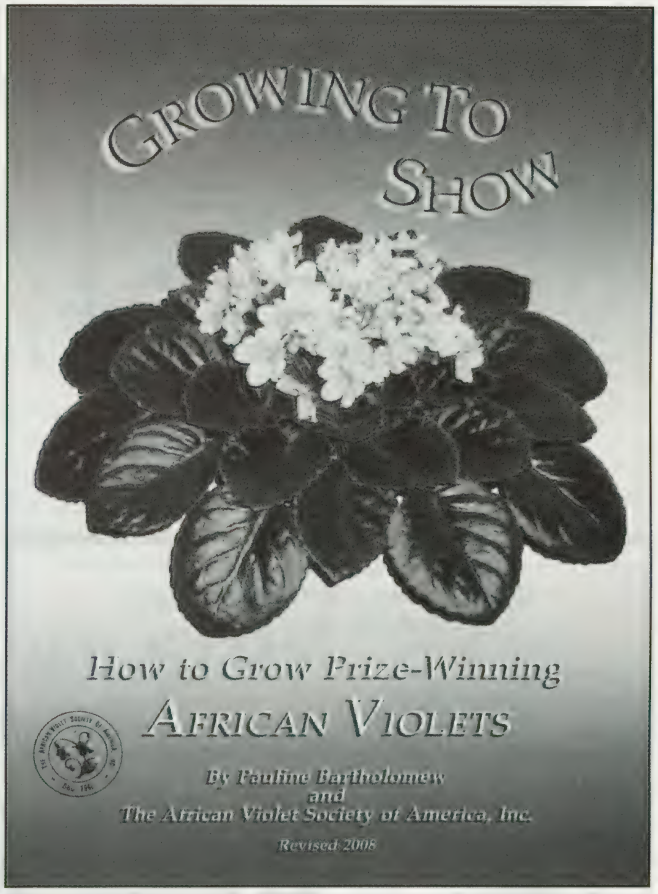

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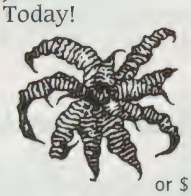

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African Violet

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OFFICERS

Winston J. Goretsky, President
32 Scimitar Point N.W.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada T3L 2B2
email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Dr. Richard Nicholas, 1st Vice President
3113 Deerfield Dr., Denton, TX 76208
email: randanicho@aol.com

Sue Ramser, 2nd Vice President
2413 Martin, Wichita Falls, TX 76308
email: ramserwf@wf.net

Susan Anderson, 3rd Vice President
4040 E. Maldonado Dr., Phoenix AZ 85042
email: sanderson122@cox.net

Edna Rourke, Treasurer
99 Old Stratford Rd., Shelton, CT 06484
email: APapillon@aol.com

Mary Corondan, Secretary
434 Plumwood Way, McKinny, TX 75069
email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

John Carter, Immediate Past President
1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012
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STAFF

Ruth Rumsey, Editor
2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702
email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Cindi Nofziger, Advertising Manager
1035 Lakewood Dr., Albany, OR 97321
email: ccnofziger@comcast.net

Sue Hoffmann, Publications Chairman
2809 Forest Hills Ct., Virginia Beach, VA 23454
email: violetsue123@outlook.com

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

Email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

For many people who live in warm or milder climates, it is hard to believe that I have been scraping ice off my windshield and dealing with snow since early October. For me, autumn is over and winter is here, which means no more outdoor yard work or gardening until next June. In Canada, we have had Thanksgiving and soon, Christmas will be upon us. We all go through various cycles and seasons and sometimes we wonder why we do it. "It's easy, it's familiar, it's what I've always done", we say. Have you sometimes felt that all of your efforts are in vain? Perhaps maybe you're bored with the way that you've been doing something and are looking for some fresh new ideas? We all get this way with repetition. Sometimes, good routines serve us well. Patterned, repetitious activity makes it easier for us to remember what we're doing and how to do it, so that we hardly have to think or engage our mind at all. We become predictable, like the warmth and comfort of an old sweater which we've had and loved for years. Don't misunderstand me, there are things that I will never change, but sometimes, it's good to shake things up a bit, step out of our comfort zone and try a new approach or maybe something altogether different.

A little while ago, a fellow who was interested in African violets contacted me. I could have referred him to our website to locate a nearby affiliate club and that would have been the end. Instead, I corresponded with him for a while, got to know him a bit, and was able to gain enough information to find a club that he might be able to visit or join.

I asked if he was a member of AVSA, which opened up a dialogue of various topics and soon, he had visited the website and become a member. I later wrote an email to the contact of the local affiliate which was closest to his home, and asked if they could reach out and invite him to their monthly meeting. They did and he was able to attend.

He wrote me a note to tell me how much fun he had and how interesting the whole experience was and he even received a few plants to take home!

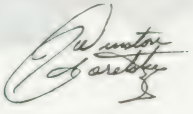
We all get set in our ways, but when we see an opportunity that maybe we can handle in a different way, sometimes it's good to go out of our way to try a different approach and see if we can change or affect the outcome.

I would just like to send out a special thank you to the members of the Wichita African Violet Study Club, who really welcomed in a new member and helped make this whole experience something worthwhile. I hope we can all be fortunate enough in our local clubs to be able to welcome new members and make their experience one that keeps them coming back.

Wichita African Violet Study Club

Back row: (left to right) Pam Pavlick (President), Patty Daniel, Judy Watson, Cris Lichtenfelt, Jeremiah Fisher, Cathy Mourning, Audrey Soergel. Front row: (left to right) Sharon Endicott, Linda Coble, Edra Holle, Wynn Soergel.

If you're reading this and don't belong to a local group, please get it touch with us and we'll try our best to help you locate a local affiliate.



Winston

Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Thanks to all of you wonderful AVSA members who have written fantastic articles for this magazine! The Article Contest details, Rules and Prizes, are on page 39 in this issue, for those members who are still considering writing an article. The Contest Cutoff Date for entries is April 1, 2017!

There are nine Contest Entries in this issue, and each of them, covering totally different topics, are outstanding. "Contest Entry" is in the upper left corner of each contest article opening page.

My genius friend, and icon in the African violet world, **Pat Hancock**, gets credit for this being such a successful contest. Not only for the outstanding prizes of leaves from some of our most popular Commercial Members, but the wonderful articles for the AVM, that so many of our members have enjoyed reading.

With the popularity of the Article Contest, and the Cutoff date in a few months, Pat asked me what I thought of having another Article Contest, with leaves from other popular growers as the prizes.

Pat said she will give me the particulars on that after the 2016 Orlando Convention.

In the meantime, a "heads-up" to our esteemed Judges from Pat:

"There have been so many great articles, and not many months left, so please have your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place Winners decided upon, and ready to be announced in April, 2017.

"Also, because we have had so many fantastic entries, we are also giving five Special Merit Awards, that Ruth and I will decide upon."

I thank all of you who have entered the Contest, giving me so many fantastic articles to share with our members. It is nice to have original articles, and not have to pour through other publications, looking for something that would be of interest. I knew we had several talented writers in our society, but I didn't realize there were so many!

Many of our members have been talking about the AVSA 2017 Convention in Orlando, Florida. The dates are May 28 – June 4, 2017. I knew that Disney World is in Orlando, but I didn't know that Orlando is referred to as the "Entertainment Capital of Florida." On page 21, you'll find information about some of the attractions available, from the Magic Kingdom and Epcot Center, to Universal Studios and Sea World. And, The Orlando Eye…

On a sad note, I learned that one of my favorite groups of friends, the "Philly Girls," recently lost a member. "The Philly Girls" are that fun-loving group of four ladies who dress up and catch the eye at each convention. Peggy Mooney passed away in September, leaving Linda Kilby, Barbara Jones, and Joan Santino to carry on. (See In Memory on page 27.)

Ruth

Office Update

By Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702
Email: avsa@earthlink.net

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer! We are loving the cooler weather here in Texas.

AVSA's 71st consecutive convention and show will be held May 28 – June 4, 2017, at the Wyndham Orlando Resort, International Drive in Orlando, Florida. Our hosts will be the African Violet Council of Florida. Registration information should be published on the website after the first of the year. If you do not have access to a computer, please call the office and I will mail you a packet. I am looking forward to seeing all of you there!

The DVD from the 70th AVSA National Convention and Show in New Mexico is now available from the office. If you pre-ordered one with your convention registration, you should have received it by now. Please let the office know if you have not. We are also offering the same content on a USB thumb drive. Both are available for purchase through our website store.

Also from our website store, you can purchase the 2017 AVSA Calendar. The cost is $15.00 (shipping included). These make great gifts for the holidays!

To login to the members section of the website:

The username: **member**

The password: **the last word of the President's column in each issue.**

Please email the office avsa@earthlink.net or call (844)-400-2872 if you have questions.

AVSA Convention Awards: Please send all your donations to the AVSA office, AVSA, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702. Send all your suggestions to Linda Hall, 517 E. Elm St., Ravenwood, MO 64479, or email Linda.hall6641@hotmail.com. You may also get a form from our website http://avsa.org/conventions-2017.

Attention Affiliates: Please make sure that your club's information is up to date with the AVSA office and with our affiliate chair, Mel Grice. You can email any changes to avsa@earthlink.net and to melsgrice@earthlink.net. The Affiliate Liability Insurance renewals will be mailed out later this month and it is very important we have the correct information. **If your President does not receive a notice by the end of November, please contact the office as soon as possible.**

Happy Growing!

amy

Question Box

By Bill Price

Email: billprice@telus.net

Q: Can I use regular potting soil for my violets? None of the local garden centers nearby carry African Violet Soil.

A: This is a question often asked by new growers as it seems so obvious – why not use pre-packaged African violet Soil?

Although "theoretically" it should be okay but for most growers it isn't, and I'll explain why. When we start out and want to grow African violets as well as possible, we learn that in addition to lighting, fertilizer, and water requirements, they also have preferences for quality soil mixes.

Although it varies in different parts of the country, most growers use mixes that are usually comprised of a mixture of peat, perlite, and vermiculite. The resulting mix tends to be light, well-draining, and 'open,' with lots of small air spaces that encourage vigorous root growth.

Although not always the case, most commercially available African violet mixes are 'heavy' with much less perlite and are much slower draining with less internal air space. I'd suggest you ask your local growers what they use and if they have good results with a pre-packaged mix, then try it yourself or if they advise certain formulas for mixes, then try that also.

In general, most commercial mixes benefit from the additions of extra coarse perlite. For example, 1 part perlite to 1-2 parts soil mix.

Q: ***Why are almost all the African violets and other Gesneriad plants I see for sale in only plastic pots? Does no one use clay pots anymore?***

A: This is a question that seems to have both economic and horticultural factors involved. Essentially clay pots used to be the mainstay as they were considered to offer healthy environments for the plants – more 'breathing' space for the roots and a cooling benefit for the roots as water evaporated off the porous clay.

However, on the down side, they are heavy, break easily, discolor, are more difficult to clean and are more expensive to produce and distribute.

Aside from the few plants that prefer more root cooling or need a heavy pot to prevent falling over, most horticultural factors are generally easy to resolve in plastic pots. For example, in a plastic pot, add extra perlite to increase soil porosity. Plastic pots also require less watering and if desired, holes can be drilled in the sides to allow increased air circulation to the roots.

Personally, in consideration also of the general over use of plastic and consequent recycling issues, I would prefer another option but for now, plastic pots seem to be the best thing available for growing our violets.

Q: Which makes for a better growing station for Gesneriads? Is it natural light through a window, or light stands?

A: I love this kind of question as the answer is "both." If we could emulate the bright shaded tropical light that most of our Gesnariads originally come from, that would be the preferred option.

In the meantime, use of a light stand with a consistent timed lighting schedule, offers an ideal growing situation, especially for smaller growing, or low rosette forming Gesneriads such as *Saintpaulia, Petrocosmea* and *Primulina.*

However, the vining varieties such as *Aeschynanthus, Columnea* and *Nematanthus* as well as the more upright growing varieties such as *Kohleria, Smithiantha*, and some tall sinningias, often do better when grown in a bright sunny window, solarium, or greenhouse. When grown under these conditions, the plants receive more even light exposure to all their foliage, not just the leaves closest to the lights.

Q: I've been out of town and returned to find my baby plantlets have produced buds, even though I have not separated them! I

have never heard of this happening to anyone else. Now, what do I do? Will it shock them if I try to separate them at this point?

A: This is not as rare an occurrence as one might think, and usually evokes a surprised reaction when first observed. Sometimes it is related to the young plantlets involved being mature enough to produce blossoms (okay so we aren't always as prompt at potting up our baby plantlets as we would like to be). At other times though, flower bud production can be initiated spontaneously from even quite a newly set leaf cutting, even before leaflets appear.

Thankfully, it is nothing to be concerned about – just pot up your baby plantlets as you would usually do and cut off the flower stalks. The plantlets will likely not be set back in the least.

Q: I disbudded once before a show, after being told that it would increase the blossom production. I was very disappointed by the outcome. My plants were full of blooms weeks before the show! Exactly how far from a show date should one begin disbudding?

A: This is a great question about a sometimes controversial procedure that many growers use.

Disbudding relies on the principle that systematically removing the developing bloom stalks before they bloom will permit the plant to put more energy into new growth and that when then allowed to come into bloom, will result in more blooms being produced.

There are several issues with this that need to be clarified. There is a 'rough guide', a general formula for disbudding African violets which recommends disbudding for several months until approximately 6-9 weeks before a show, longer time for double, and shorter time for single-blooming varieties. This needs to be considered as a guide, and not necessarily as a formula etched in stone. Except for some minis and semis that are noted to respond positively to one disbudding in the 6-9 weeks pre-show time frame, most varieties need to be disbudded for a longer time period to achieve any positive results. Some varieties respond very positively to this procedure while others sulk, and are slow to come into bloom again.

The best advice I can suggest, is to discuss with other growers in your area about their experience and most importantly, experiment with your own plants and make note how they respond under your conditions. I would suggest you "practice" this during the year with different varieties so that when show time comes, you have a more accurate sense of the disbudding protocol for the varieties you grow, and under your growing conditions.

Once you have determined the response pattern of the plants, and you want to grow for show, then use your own data to figure out a time schedule for the disbudding. Prior to a show, take a calendar and 'count back' the weeks from your show date, making notation of when to disbud which variety, and when to stop for that particular variety. Having said this, there still will be some plants that will develop too soon or too late.

AVSA – Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner, Chairman • 12916 Midfield Terrace • St. Louis MO 63146

1 June through 30 September, 2016 • TOTAL $354.00

Thumbprint - Under $25

David B. Tucker
Lynda Nardone
Katherine L. Varnes
Marcia Sunderman
Reginald N. Arrington
Robin Murray
Marvin Nester
Suet Lai Meung Rosetta
Moonlight AVS/TX
Wilma Wolverton
Elaine Niece

Two Tone - $25-$49

Spring Branch AVC/TX

Multicolor - $50-$99

Dolores Gibbs
In memory of Danny Tidwell's mother, Wanda Tidwell
Caroline Epstein
Jeri Anderson

Geneva - $100-$499

Caroline Storey

Donna's Mother's Love

Exhibited by:
Richard Nicholas
Hybridized by:
D. Brining
Standard

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Sierra Sunrise

Exhibited by:
Diane Kaluhiokalani
Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Jersey Little Devil

Exhibited by: *BJ Ohme*

Hybridized by: *R. Kurzynski*

Semiminiature

Contest Entry

Fertilizer Enhancements: What works and How Urea, Epsom salts, silicon, Ra-Pid-Gro Bloom Builder and more

By Neil Lipson

For twenty-five years I used urea-based fertilizers with no problems, but many growers avoid it like the plague. In contrast, in my thirty-four years of growing I have never used Epsom salts, and never gave it much thought. I decided to dig into what these and other micronutrients will do to improve your violets. I also did a lot of research into an old favorite fertilizer that is no longer made that was VERY popular in its day, which was Ra-Pid-Gro Bloom Builder. Ra-Pid-Gro made a few fertilizers, but this particular one was quite special. Was it as good as the growers said, and how do you duplicate it today? Read on!

UREA

First, with fertilizer, you need to know that urea MAY be used IF you have a soil that contains enough bacteria to break it down. A good example of soils that will accomplish this are Promix-BX, Promix-HP and Baccto soil to name a few. Unless you are really experienced, either avoid it or keep the urea portion on the label under 9%. I used to use Jack's 20-20-20 that had 18% urea, but I used a high percentage of Baccto soil with it and did not have a problem (75% Baccto and 25% perlite for my top-watered plants).

I have seen some growers have incredible success with urea-based fertilizers, but they had some VERY specific growing conditions as well as the extensive experience in knowing how to use it. It's like these recipes that the super-growers use that are like gourmet home cooking, or when I was developing photographs in my darkroom way back when film was used.

Now, why did I bring this topic up recently? Because I heard from a few of these super-growers that their favorite blooming fertilizer from years ago was Ra-Pid-Gro Bloom Builder that contained urea. I heard so many positive facts about it that I decided to search for a small sample of the fertilizer to have it analyzed, and do some testing on it. Well, after thirty years, it's NOT easy to find any, so if anyone still has some, I only need a little to do the analysis that I will make available to you and others. Contact me PLEASE if you have Ra-Pid-Gro Bloom Builder (NOT the regular plant food).

I spoke to Joyce Stork about urea and when it might be a concern, and she responded with this comment:

"According to Paul Nelson at North Carolina State University, ammonium toxicity is linked to high urea-based fertilizers. If there is active soil bacteria present, it is capable of breaking down the ammonia into usable nitrogen. Toxicity only occurs when bacteria are deactivated, usually by low soil pH (below 6) or temperatures below 70 degrees F. Ammonium toxicity in most crops (he was not an African violet specialist but knew this was true for gloxinia) causes leaf curl, leaf margins burned, a reduced root structure, and an orange-brown tone to the roots that is distinctly different from normal root color."

I do know that even today, many manufacturers of African violet fertilizers use urea at various

percentages. Because of what people were saying, but not because I personally was worried about it, I switched to Plant Marvel 14-12-14 which is urea-free. I have had excellent results because Plant Marvel also has micronutrients, which many other fertilizers DO NOT have. (I have discussed this in great detail in previous AVM articles.)

EPSOM SALTS

Epsom Salts provide Magnesium, which is a micronutrient requirement for violets. Magnesium is the connecting element in the molecules of chlorophyll. Nitrogen has to attach to magnesium or the molecules can't be formed no matter how rich in nitrogen the fertilizer is. I personally have never used it and just purchased a bag of it to try. Keep in mind that if you have variegated plants that have turned almost solid white and you want to green them up, start with about 1/4 tsp. per gallon. I have heard some growers use much more than this, but on the AVSA website they also suggest 1/4 tsp.

A good example of when you would use Epsom salts is with preparing a heavily variegated violet, such as Ann, to start leaves. The greener the leaf, the easier the growth of babies. You would use this along with a high nitrogen fertilizer to "fill out" the green portion of the leaf. Ann has very bright white edges, which decreases photosynthesis and makes propagation much more difficult and slower.

READ THIS HOT TIP FOR BETTER BLOOMS!

Many people will use a high phosphate fertilizer (middle number) , such as an NPK blooming formulation as Better Bloom Orchid 11-35-15 (yes it works on violets), but recently the experienced growers have been staying with the "normal" fertilizers, such as Optimara 14-12-14 or the almost identical one from Plant Marvel.

Take SPECIAL note that the last number, potassium, is as high as the nitrogen. A few years ago I did an article on fertilizers, and many readers missed this IMPORTANT comment! I am repeating it again, as it really makes a difference.

N-P-K numbers mean the following: The N is nitrogen (for growth), P is phosphorous (for root and shoot growth and blooming), and K is potassium (also called Potash and is for blooming). The numbers represent a percent of the total.

But there's more! Potassium also gives you a higher quantity of blossoms, better vibrance to the colors, and longevity to the blossoms. This is important to African violet growers, especially during the shows. I use Plant Marvel 14-12-14 all year round. During shows, I will increase the amount I add to the rain water by about 50%, keeping the same 14-12-14 ratio.

Yes, there are some violets that actually do need a high phosphate boost for shows, but most DO NOT. A good example of this is Sugar N' Spice, which will produce many blooms when you use a special bloom-booster formulation from Jack's Fertilizer (also known as Peters) which was called their VARIEGATED VIOLET 5-50-18.

WHY ONE FERTILIZER/SOIL COMBINATION MAY WORK FOR ONE PERSON AND NOT ANOTHER

Everyone's growing conditions are different, even in the same house from one room to another. This is why you must experiment on what combination works best for you. You can try it on a few plants, but keep track of what you do, and make only ONE CHANGE AT A TIME! If you make two changes, you'll never know which change caused the problem (or the improvement).

I always recommend that people experiment and publish their results either in the AVM, Facebook, or other AV social network sites so that we can all benefit. Growing violets is an evolving science, and there is no end to the research. At least try to do it on some scientific level.

I would like to thank Carolee Carter for her help, both technically and proofreading.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern time. He will return your call.

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

K's Want Some Wine

Exhibited and Hybridized by: *Kathy Hajner*

Standard

Photo Credit: **Kathy Hajner**

K's Sage Wand

Hybridized, Grown, and Photographed by: *Kathy Hajner*

Contest Entry

Grooming for Show... Grooming as you Grow

By Kurt Jablonski

If you've ever had the pleasure of chatting with Pat Hancock, hybridizer of the 'Buckeye' African Violets, you know that often she talks about three important aspects of violet growing: touching your plants, judging African violets, and the importance of grooming your show plants on a consistent basis. In this article I will discuss the importance of grooming African Violets for show.

I am a better grower today than I was a few years ago because I started working with my plants everyday. The main thing that I have done is to groom my violets and remove the bottom three leaves every time I repot. African violets grow leaves in sets of three. It is these sets of three leaves that form triangles. Eventually these triangles overlap each other to form a round symmetrical plant. For this reason it is important that we groom as we grow.

In judging violets, symmetry accounts for twenty-five points out of one hundred, but as far as I'm concerned, it is *the most important part of growing the plant*. Without a good foundation of foliage, it doesn't matter how nice a head of bloom you have. For this reason, I have made it my mission to have the best foliage I possibly can. This starts with grooming your plants from the time they are in Solo™ cups, until they reach maturity.

All marred, broken, and immature leaves should be removed - *always*. Any time you remove one leaf from a row, because it is either smaller or damaged, look for the other two leaves in that row, and remove them as well. This will ensure that you do not end up with a lop-sided plant. Many people are obsessed with big African violets, and are swayed by their size. But if you read the ***AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*** there are **no extra points for big plants**. The true goal is **PERFECTION**!

It took me a long time to understand this. After going to violet shows and seeing these humungous violet plants, I was determined to do it myself. In my early years of growing that meant leaving on damaged, immature leaves in the outside row of the plant, just because the plant had achieved the **SIZE** I wanted. The problem was the plant looked awful because there were so many leaves that needed to be removed. It was so far from **PERFECT**. If only I knew then, what I know now...

Thinking about it logically may help you understand the importance of removing those leaves. If a plant has extra rows of unnecessary leaves there is the potential to have more points taken off during judging. More leaves equal more leaves to be judged. It is for this reason that your plant must be groomed, all the time, as it goes from pot size to pot size. Removing these lower three leaves every time you repot (*which should be every 2-3 months when growing for show*) stimulates the center leaves to grow, and you will see that the overall size of the leaves actually increases. (This is Pat's method for growing larger, perfect plants.)

This method is very beneficial because you can achieve a mature, symmetrical plant with fewer rows of leaves if your leaves are larger. Larger leaves overlap each other better and cover all of the soil. **NO** soil should ever be visible when you look down on an African violet. So it is important to **GROOM**, **GROOM**, **GROOM**!

Symmetry is defined as the shape of the **WHOLE** plant. Not just the outermost row of leaves. Baby, marred, and off-size leaves are not only present in the outermost row but can many times be found in the middle of the plant. These smaller rows of leaves often develop if you did not pot up your plant at the right time. The plant is used to constantly being potted up, which stimulates the growth of the center. If this is not maintained, the plant will throw out a smaller row of leaves. That is why it is crucial to incrementally pot up your plants every 2-3 months using the mold-potting (pot in pot) method. This will almost

always eliminate the occurrence of off-size leaves in the middle of the plant.

If you have a row of smaller leaves in the middle of your plant you will lose points under '*condition*' (up to 1 point each). If your plant develops smaller leaves in the middle, try and remove those three leaves as soon as possible. You should be able to easily snap them out. Catching them early, usually means the new growth will fill in and cover where those smaller leaves would have been. I have done it myself with excellent results. Your plants won't miss a beat. It is for this reason that you must be a diligent grower in your practices with your plants, and repot and groom on a regular schedule.

Also, there is a fine line between grooming enough and "over-grooming." You do not want to over-groom your plant, because then it will never grow, or achieve show plant status. I know growers who hover over their plants, constantly removing leaves that should be left on. Your plants do need your utmost attention, but you can also easily overdo it. When I first started, one of my early club members, Barbara Jones, told me if I didn't quit constantly taking leaves off my standards then I'd never get then out of Solo cups. Boy was she right. So, if I can learn, so can you!

Every time I visit a violet show I'm amazed at the amount of unnecessary leaves left on plants that should have been removed while the plants were growing. Grooming is truly what makes the difference between a blue ribbon and Best in Show. Even growers who have been growing for years and are considered veterans in the violet world, surprised me when I saw all the baby, marred, and off-sized leaves left on their plants. To me these leaves stick out like sore thumbs. You must **TRAIN** your eye if you want to grow show plants. Train your eye for symmetry, and leaf perfection. If these exhibitors had just gone back to basics and groomed their plants from early on, the quality of all the exhibits in the show could have been sky-high.

When you arrive at Classification and Entries, you should not be there for hours grooming your plants. All of that should have been done throughout the growing stages. You can't expect to turn your frog into a prince right then and there. The only things that should be done are *last minute touch-ups*. This includes brushing your leaves, removing spent blooms, propping leaves on each other and re-positioning bloom stems that moved around in transit. All other grooming should already be done. I honestly cringe when I see exhibitors pull out white index cards and start covering questionable leaves that they think need to be removed. At show time that shouldn't be necessary because there shouldn't be any leaves that need to be removed if the plant was groomed properly its entire life.

Our violet shows are about stimulating interest in the pubic and showing them the beauty of our hybrids as well as our ability to grow beautiful plants. We need to put on the best possible shows so we can encourage the public to grow African violets. The very first time I saw show plants I fell in love with their beauty. Knowing that they could be grown like that made me interest and I joined a local club and AVSA. The same might be true of some potential violet grower. Also, I have heard from many judges that it is much harder to judge poor quality plants than really good plants. If nothing else, let's try to make it easier on the judges, and improve our growing so that we can attract new members to AVSA.

Below I have included several photos of '*Buckeye Main Event*' that show the three-leaf pattern and the overlapping triangles that I spoke about in the article. You will notice in **Photo 1** that the plant started out as two triangles. Four months later (**photo 2**) it was three triangles. **Photo 3** shows the circular shape starting to appear. **Photo 4** shows the round plant before bloom. Finally in **photo 5** you can see the plant is mature and has a completely round shape. I repotted the plant every 2-3 months, and I took off the bottom three leaves. In the end I was left with a plant that was round, symmetrical, and had **ZERO** baby, marred, or misshapened leaves.

In the final photo you can see me with the plant, which was part of my 'Buckeye Collection' in Albuquerque. Try this method on a few plants. I know that consistant grooming and removing those three outside leaves makes for a more **PERFECT** plant every time!

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Photo 4

Photo 5

'Buckeye Nostalgia' - The Show Plant That Almost Wasn't

By Pat Hancock

I hear all the time from hobby hybridizers that *"when you hybridize, you should have a goal - or plan."* I had a plan back in 1992 when I first began making 'Buckeyes.'

My plan was to make a white African violet with a bright red ruffled edge. It is now twenty-four years later and I still do not have that violet.

African violets do seem to have a "mind of their own," both in how they grow and in how they reproduce. In 2006, I decided I would like to make a red African violet blossom with white or blue fantasy on variegated foliage. I chose 'Buckeye Midnight Kiss' for the 'mother' and 'Live Wire' for the pollen parent.

Both were shades of red. Lots of babies came up and I waited impatiently for the first blooms. Both parents had red to dark foliage, but the babies all seemed to be lighter in color. Then they began to bloom - one after another - white and more white. To say that I was disappointed is an understatement.

One day I was on my way to play Bridge at the home of my friend who was once my next door neighbor. She has a large bay window on the north side of her house where she is able to grow beautiful African violets. I picked up a seedling that had not bloomed as yet and took it to her. She had never had a white African violet before. About six months later, I went to her house again to play Bridge.

There in her bay window was this beautiful pale blue African violet in full bloom. I said, "Carol, where did you get that violet?"

She replied, "That's the one you brought me the last time you were here."

I said, "You need to give me a few leaves - I love it!"

That is the story of 'Buckeye Nostalgia' - the one that almost got away. I believe it now has about six or seven Best in Show awards. I didn't get the African violet that I planned, but I'm very happy to have bred 'Buckeye Nostalgia.'

From the Lone Star AV Council *Newsletter*

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

Contest Entry

Back to Our Roots – Part One

By Maureen Pratt
Maureen@maureenpratt.com

Each African violet grower has his or her unique perspective (and secret techniques!) on what makes an African violet healthy and show-stopping gorgeous. But there is one thing they agree on: From the tip of the leaf to the bottom of the pot, a plant's root system is the key to hearty, consistent condition and robust growth.

For this 2-part article, I spoke with several expert growers and hybridizers to find out what they have learned about plant root care, growth tendencies, and new techniques that might assist others to improve the quality of their plants' roots. They shared some wonderful tips and "lessons learned," and collectively provided lots of encouragement: If we apply our attention and time to plant roots just as we do to the above soil plant, we can have a better experience with the entire AV growing process.

Beginnings and Basics

Some plants have a "main" or "tap" root, but African violets do not. Their roots are fibrous and radiate from the stem of the plant throughout the pot, sometimes forming a tight mass or "root ball."

AV roots might not be as glamourous as the rest of the plant, but they serve several crucial purposes: They absorb nutrients and moisture and send these into the rest of the plant's tissue, they provide stability for the plant (especially important for species in the wild), and sometimes can even signal when attention is needed.

Healthy roots

Roots needing attention

The basis for good roots is the soil mix we use, and lighter is definitely better.

"AVs don't like heavy soils," says Dr. Jeff Smith, PhD, an AVM columnist and noted AV genetics expert. "It relates back to species. Most of them grow on bare rock, moss covered rocks, cracks and crevices, holes in bark – there's not much depth to any soil. They are using their roots as anchors and to absorb water and nutrients. This is one of the reasons we need such a light, airy mix. AV roots need a lot of oxygen. If you cut off the oxygen supply, the roots would probably just choke."

Another root killer is overwatering.

"I know that some of the species are sensitive to overwatering and oxygen starvation," says Dr. Jeff. "You can kill *S. clone velutina* real fast with a heavier mix and too much water. The same with *S. clone intermedia*."

Roots are "temperature and fertilizer strength sensitive," Dr. Jeff says. "Going back to the wild state, these plants don't get a lot of nutrients. You can burn the roots easily from too much or too strong fertilizer. And if you use cold water, it will shock the roots."

Species' roots are not alone in their sensitivities. Hybrid roots of all varieties also require particular care for plants to grow well – beginning with the soil medium and the pot.

In the Mix

"The roots of your plant are the most important part of your plant," says Pat Hancock, AVSA Judge, award-winning grower, and a noted hybridizer of the 'Buckeye series,' which are famous for their variegation, bloom, and size. To get these beauties to be at their best, she follows a specific process.

"I believe in mold potting, not in disturbing the roots," says Pat. "If you disturb those roots when you repot [my plants] you'll have a row of small leaves. You might have to start the plant over if you get that."

Mold potting is a technique where the plant is taken out of one pot and "fit" into another of a larger size with no, to minimal cutting, or otherwise disturbing the root ball.

Pat starts her plants off in Solo cups, then jumps several sizes in pots from there.

"I can go to a 5" squatty pot [a 5" pot that is shallower than an azalea pot] without putting them in anything in between," she says. "Violets like shallow pots because they are actually a shallow-rooted plant. That's another reason for not potting them too deeply. Pot the plant right below the rim. This puts the roots where they ought to be."

She wick waters her plants, keeping the soil "barely moist, but not soaking wet."

"The best wick, in my opinion, is cutting women's pantyhose," says Pat. "Take the top off, fold the legs lengthwise twice and cut about a fourth of an inch wide strips (depending on how heavy the stocking was.) They last quite a long time. If I don't have pantyhose, I use two strands of a 4-ply acrylic yarn."

Pat does not put a newly-repotted plant on the water-well immediately.

"I keep it off the well at least two weeks, maybe three, and top-water. Then, I let the water run through and put it on the water-well. If you put the plant on the water-well immediately, the roots still have to get down into the new soil. You have to wait at least two weeks, until the roots are happy again."

She puts a layer of perlite or red lava rock in the bottom of the pots.

"Once the roots get down in there, they have air spaces," she says. "I don't use vermiculite. I don't think people should put vermiculite in the soil, especially in the summer. Vermiculite holds water. Perlite rejects water."

Pat also does not test for ph. "I've never worried about it," she says. "What people think is a ph problem is, that they don't repot often enough. Get a good soil and repot more often."

AVs and Other Gesneriads, Too

Mel Grice, AVM columnist, started growing AVs when he was ten years old, and now has more than fifty different genera in the gesneriad family. His switch to ProMix HP, which has "beneficial bacteria" (Mycorrhizae), has resulted in more vigorous roots, and to increase their numbers, Mel adds dried molasses to his soil mixture.

Mel tests his water, which he gets from an at-home reverse-osmosis filtration machine, about every "couple of months, or so" to avoid root rot caused by water that is too alkaline.

"Sometimes, I am so busy that I don't get to things as quickly as I should," he says. "Sometimes, I go from a Solo cup to a 4-inch pot."

He does not add vermiculite to the soil for wick-watered plants, however, the exact composition of his growing medium will vary, depending on the kind of plant and its roots' growth habit.

"You need to find out where these things grow," he says. "If they grow on limestone rocks, they need to be more acidic, to have more dolomite lime in the soil, for example."

A growers' geographic location makes a difference, too. Ambient humidity, temperature fluctuations, and other considerations impact the type of additives a grower might need to help plants flourish.

"Your region makes a big difference," Mel says. "If you're in Texas, for example, you might need more vermiculite. It depends on where you are and what works in your conditions."

If a grower is testing a new soil mix, fertilizer or water, he advises, "Try different things, but not on everything at once. Give it time to see if it will work under your conditions before using it on all of your plants."

Pat Hancock says, "You shouldn't do more than two or three plants if you're going to change things, especially with regard to soil and fertilizers."

Small Steps, Big Results

Paula Bal has been growing AVs since she was 10 years old. Her AV entries have won numerous top awards, and she serves on the Board of AVSA, and is an AVSA Judge. An outdoor gardener as well, she grows "a little bit of everything," and learned the importance of roots from her grandfather, who was also a gardener.

"I grow large standards, semis, minis, species, and other gesneriads," she says. "But for all of them, I think roots are like having a good foundation as a child."

Paula wicks or mat waters her plants and adds perlite to the bottoms of her pots. Using a very light soilless mix and beginning with the sturdiest seedlings, her growing technique gives her plants' roots more room to grow gradually.

"I mold pot, and I never skip a pot size," she says. "I'm going to start a seedling in a pot that the roots can handle, even a thumb pot, then move up one size at a time. Ideally, I repot every 3-4 months, but I don't necessarily move a plant to the next pot size if a plant doesn't have a decent root system, I keep it in the same pot size instead of moving it up to a bigger pot."

How do you know the plant is "ready" for repotting?

"You have to know your plant," says Paula. "Some plants have a larger amount of roots than others, but all the roots should look healthy. There should be a whiteness to them, and they should be growing into the perlite [at the bottom of the pot]. If they're black, brown or mushy, you have a problem."

Coming Up...

When a problem with roots occurs, the grower needs to react quickly to save the plant. Part Two of "Getting Back to Our Roots" will offer suggestions about identifying and addressing root problems – and give some new and novel ideas about nurturing root growth from stems, leaves, and whole plants!

Photo Credit: **Erika Geimonen**

Rob's Sarsparilla

Seminiature

Hybridized by: *R. Robinson*

Exhibited and Photographed by: *Erika Geimonen*

The Entertainment Capital of Florida - Orlando

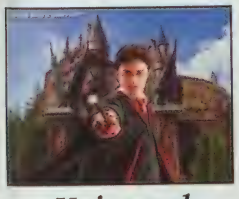
The problems with describing what attractions await you in the City of Orlando, home of the African Violet Society of America's 2017 Convention, are the many choices. What can be left out? Here are some highlights:

The Magic Kingdom

The four major theme parks in Walt Disney World attract people from America and around the world. There is the Magic Kingdom, with its six themed lands based on classic Disney movies. Animal Kingdom includes animals real, ancient and imagined. The Disney Hollywood Studios unite illusion and reality, using technological magic. And, Epcot showcases the future world with Spaceship Earth.

Epcot Center

Universal Orlando has two theme parks: Universal Studios Florida and Islands of Adventure, both based on the film industry. Universal Studios will take you into the world of a movie studio, and Islands of Adventure offers unique places such as The Wizarding World of Harry Potter. The Universal City Walk offers shopping, night clubs, and dining. In 2017, the Volcano Bay Water Park will open.



Universal Studio Islands of Adventure

Then there are the SeaWorld Parks. Marine life abounds with dolphin shows and killer whale performances that combine education and entertainment, connecting people to the sea and sea life. In Tampa, Busch Gardens includes a unique blend of animal attractions, shows, and rides.

Sea World

This only skims the surface. There is so much to see and experience. For more information on the places described here, and others, visit the Orlando Attractions website: http://www.visitorlando.com/things-to-do/theme-parks/

Octopus

Just 500 feet from the hotel's entrance is I Drive 360 - a small plaza with restaurants and attractions. The Coca-Cola Orlando Eye, Madame Tussauds, and Sea Life Aquarium are located here. You enter an enclosed, air-conditioned lobby and purchase tickets for one, or all three attractions. The attractions are suitable for wheelchairs and others with disabilities.

The Orlando Eye is a 400 foot tall giant Ferris wheel with thirty gondola-like air-conditioned cabins that hold up to fifteen people. You will see breathtaking views of Central Florida in all directions including downtown Orlando, the theme parks, many lakes and other landscapes. On a clear day, you can see the Kennedy Space Center on Florida's east coast. The leisurely thirty-minute ride includes a pre-flight 4D cinema show for a spectacular multi-sensory experience.

The Orlando Eye

Other adventures include Madame Tussauds wax figures where you can shake hands with the President or Neymar. In the Sea Life Aquarium, the 360° ocean tunnel takes you face-to-face with over 5,000 creatures from around the world. And don't forget to check out the restaurants: Outback, Carraba's, and others. Yard House for beer and ale, Tin Roof for music and dining. There's even a Ben & Jerrys for ice cream lovers. So bring your walking shoes, and your cameras, and enjoy the entertainment capital of Florida!

Photo Credit: **Margaret Rose**

Star Turn

Hybridized and Photographed by: *Margaret Rose*

Standard

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence *Email:* missjennae@yahoo.com

Sometimes wonderful things are right in front of us, but for whatever reason we fail to see them. Such may be the case with the African Violet Society of America website. I will admit, it has been quite a while since I took a look at this website. I was amazed at what I found.

The Welcome page contains basic information explaining the site. A sidebar has links to each of the pages on the site. A slideshow of various violets proved to be mesmerizing.

The Board Directory is a PDF file that can be downloaded. An interesting feature here was the Organization Chart on pages 14-15. This has a format similar to a "family tree" showing who is responsible for various areas of AVSA operations. It is very easy to understand, and has clear explanations of relationships and responsibilities.

The Events tab has a complete list of upcoming African violet shows, Gesneriad shows, plant sales, instructional classes, and judging schools. Events were listed across the United States. There was an option to add an event, either online or by downloading and printing a PDF to mail.

The page to join the AVSA featured photos of members definitely having fun. There were no tags on the photos, but from a blue straw hat and giant sunglasses, to photos of smiling folks, it was obvious that everyone has a good time at AVSA events. A list of benefits of membership was included on this page. People wishing to join, or renew memberships, can do so online. Again, a PDF is a mail-in possibility. There is also an option to purchase gift memberships.

The Library tab proved to contain a wealth of information. Again, the information on this page had been recently updated. Videos are a big feature here. One of three videos, titled Design Walkthrough Part One was filmed at the recently held 2016 national convention. One can also access various club newsletters, yearbooks, and show schedules here.

Click on the Local Clubs tab and more pictures of people having fun are displayed immediately. Again, a sidebar allows the searcher to find the region of the country in which they live, and a click there leads to a list of local clubs. I clicked Area Nine, and while I am a member of a Colorado club, I did find that there is a Wyoming club, although it is a good six-hour drive away.

The Plants-Supplies Sources section had a huge list of vendors by state. Supplies and plants are available for purchase. There was also a link to options for advertising in this magazine. A DVD titled, *Meet the Commercials*, was displayed on this page. It can be purchased through the AVSA store, along with books, CDs and DVDs, calendars, and more.

The Magazine tab featured a photo of the current cover, with links to current articles. Brief summaries of the articles are provided. Access to an online index for all issues back to 1947 was also an option. Likewise, there was an index of photos in recent issues. A quick perusal showed a list of photos for the last sixteen years.

The AVSA offers one or two scholarships a year. Applicants must have twenty semester or quarter credits, and must maintain a "B", or higher, grade point. More information about this opportunity can be found under the Scholarship tab, as can options for making donations to the AVSA. There are many choices, from building maintenance and research to endowment funds.

Violets 101 contains all the information an individual needs to successfully grow, propagate, and show violets. Button type links with pictures are the entryways to broad subjects. Design was a random test choice. This led to cross-links with the three 2016 Design Walkthrough videos mentioned previously. There were also options to learn about flower arranging and more. A side bar had the answers to frequently asked questions, including the topic of scents in violets.

A complete website Table of Contents helps the viewer find anything they might want. Each main area of the website is listed, with numerous subheadings below.

If you, like me, have not explored our own website in a while, I strongly urge you to do so. I certainly could have written much, much more about this. The AVSA website should be the first one we recommend when anyone asks about African violets. www.avsa.org

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Milang Skies

Exhibited by: *Terri Post*

Hybridized by: *G. Ford*

Standard

Morgan's Junior Mint

Exhibited by:
Oriana Harrison
Hybridized by:
C. Eros
Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Streptocarpus 'Lady Slipper Blue Ice'

Exhibited by:
Richard Nicholas

Contest Entry

Things I've Done, That You Shouldn't

By Karyn Cichocki

After attending the interesting presentations and talking to fellow gesneriad lovers at this past convention, it brought to mind the many things I've done to torture my plants and my household. I would like to pass these along to you in hopes that you might not have to suffer from the same mistakes.

1. When you see, read, or hear about a ***new-to-you*** growing or watering method, fertilizer, pest control, or soil mix, just try it on a few duplicate plants that you have.

I saw a presentation on 'Texas' wicking and thought it was a fabulous idea. Pots have two rows of holes burned or drilled into the bottom sides of the pot, perlite is put into the bottom of the pot, and then soil and the plant are added. The pot is then placed in a saucer and the saucer is filled with water, which gets wicked up into the pot. Whenever the plant is watered, the water is placed in the saucer to be wicked up into the pot. I put holes in almost all my pots, re-potted my collection, and then watched as most of my plants died off. What I didn't pay attention to is that the soil mix has to be light. Growing conditions can not be cool if you want to wick water and any excess water in the saucer needs to be poured out.

2. Isolate, isolate, did I say isolate? You must do this with any new plant material you bring into your home, regardless from who it comes (including your new best friend), to prevent bringing in any unwanted pests or diseases into your home.

I always isolate new plants but the one time that I didn't, I was very sorry. I received a plant from a friend and when I got it home I was in a rush and just placed it on the light stand. If I had taken a few seconds to think about where the plant had been growing I wouldn't have done this. (It was in a greenhouse that had a dirt floor, and lots of exposure to outside air.)

That plant came with small slugs that managed to crawl all over the plants on three stands. Because they leave a shiny trial I discovered them quite quickly and put several saucers of cheap beer on the stands to trap them. This has worked for me outside in the garden but either they didn't like my choice of beer, or this type of slug was a teetotaler. I finally purchased slug bait that I sprinkled in the bottom of my trays and that was the end of the slugs. But the bigger problem was that it appeared that foliar mealy bugs were riding on the backs of the slugs (probably not) and before I knew it, I had a bad infestation. It took me almost two years to get rid of them and during that time I couldn't share any plants nor provide plants for my club's Sales Table.

3. Composted dehydrated cow manure – a great source of nutrients, doesn't smell. Again I heard about the use of this from an excellent African violet grower, but I didn't pay attention to how much was used in the soil mix or what watering method the grower used. So I purchased some, and added it to my soil mix using 1 part of it to 1 part each of peat moss, coarse perlite, and vermiculite, that I usually used to make up my soil mix. The first plants I repotted with this soil mix were all my African violets, which I grow on a light stand in my dining room. The plants were wicked and in a couple of weeks I had an infestation of fungus gnats flying around the house, which upset my husband. He wanted to know where all the fruit flies came from and I didn't dare tell him what they were and where they were coming from. I don't like using strong pesticides so I posted on "Gesneriphiles" (a gesneriad e-mail group) asking if anyone had suggestions as to how to control these critters. Someone suggested using Gnatrol WDG, which is a granular larvicide containing *Bacillus thuringiensis*. This is added to water and the plants

were watered with this mixture once a week. Once I killed the fungus growing in the soil, I no longer had the gnats, but it took a few weeks.

So that brings us back to #1, pay attention to all the details of a new method, and try it out on a few plants. The old saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," is a good rule of thumb. If the soil mix, watering method, fertilizer, etc., is working well for you, and your plants look great, don't change anything. If you want to try something new (we always want our plants to look better), then only change one thing and only use it on a couple of plants, and wait a couple of months to see how your plants will react. Make sure you are happy with the results before using it on your whole collection. If you have different growing areas in your house, I would also test the new method on several plants growing in those different areas to make sure it works for those plants.

In Memory

Peggy Mooney, longtime member of AVSA and member of the "Philly Girls," who dazzled convention attendees with their matching outfits and fun themes, passed away in September, 2016.

Peggy was a native of Philadelphia, and had many hobbies; traveling, playing the organ, building miniature house displays, and growing beautiful African violets.

The idea of dressing up with a theme started at the 2009 MAAVS convention in Williamsburg, Virginia. MAAVS members always dressed up during dinner on the Friday evening of their annual Show and Sale.

The Philly Girls: Linda Kilby, Barbara Jones, Peggy Mooney, & Joan Santino.

Joan Santino persuaded Barbara Jones and Peggy Mooney to join her in promoting the 2011 AVSA National Convention, Philadelphia/Cherry Hill, at the Friday evening MAAVS costume dinner. They wore red blazers and Philadelphia Phillies red and white neck scarves. Signs on their backs announced "*Think Philly*" at Peggy Mooney's suggestion.

The Philly Girls are a real hit with the AVSA membership, adding a lot of fun to the conventions.

In Memory of Connie Salland

Violet lover and hybridizer, **Connie Salland**, passed away in April 2015. She was a member of the Tidewater African Violet Society for many years. Connie loved to grow chimeras, and was an inspiration to many growers. In March of 1997 she registered a miniature Chimera named 'Cool Jewel.' Also, in November of 1997, a standard Chimera was named after her by hybridizer Ruth Loomis.

Connie is missed by all of her violet friends.

In Search of New Violets

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy *Email:* JSmith4@bsu.edu

Thanks to everyone who contacted me about the article "What's in a Number?" in the July/August issue of the *African Violet Magazine*. That article produced more comments than any I've written in the past several years. I hope the article generates some increased interest in the tetraploids and that we might get some new tetraploid plants developed. Several individuals have plants in their collections that may well be unconfirmed tetraploids based on their slow growth, brittle foliage and increased size. However, confirmation of the tetraploid status can only be done by counting the chromosomes, a technique that will likely be beyond the average grower. If you suspect a tetraploid plant, the more practical way to estimate the chromosome number would be to use a microscope and get measurements of the stomata. Tetraploids have larger stomata on average than a diploid plant. Be sure to take a number of measurements (30-50) between your suspected tetraploid and other African violets. If the overall average size of the stomata on your suspected tetraploid is larger than other plants, then you "might" have a tetraploid.

Q: Is it possible to get reverse fantasy (white streaks on a blue background) on a chimera?

A: This is not a combination you can hybridize for. Chimeras happen when and where they will. Stress seems to increase the frequency of a plant sporting to a chimera, but the chimera trait does not appear to be inherited. Having said that, I recently did spot a picture on Facebook of a hybrid that appeared to be a chimera with white outer edge stripes and reverse fantasy center stripes. The amount of white streaks in the blue center stripes was small, but definitely there. I don't know the history or breeding of the plant but it was a striking combination of colors in the flowers.

Q: The flower pigment article by Dr. Rachel Martin's team (July/August AVM pg 36) reported a high amount of yellow pigment in the flowers of 'Storm's Eye'. However, this flower looks purple by all accounts. How is this possible?

A: The report of a high amount of yellow pigment in what appears to be a purple African violet flower was surprising and I hope Dr. Martin's team uncovers more plants with this seeming contradiction in flower color and the causes behind them. In some e-mails with Dr. Martin, she speculated that the actual yellow pigment is closely related to the blue/purple pigments and that the color change might be a conversion of some sort in a common pathway that produces both colors. Until her team gets an actual chemical identification of the elusive yellow pigment, it will be difficult to say exactly what is going on. She does suggest that using 'Storm's Eye' in a cross with other yellow flowered plants might be an unsuspected way to get yellow flowered offspring.

On a side note – there have been a large number of *Streptocarpus* hybrids released lately that have yellow overlays in the bottom petals. I've only grown a few of these, but the amount of yellow and purple in these flowers seems to be highly related to the light source and light intensity. My plants under fluorescent lights have produced higher amounts of total pigment, including yellow than plants grown in natural light. The pigments in *Streptocarpus* are essentially identical to those in African violets so it might be interesting to see if a similar trend for variable amounts of yellow pigments holds for African violets too.

Q: Can the reverse fantasy of 'Rainbow's Quiet Riot' be produced in other background colors such as red?

A: I have seen a sport of 'Rainbow's Quiet Riot' with a pink background and white fantasy streaks so I suspect other colors such as red are at least theoretically possible. I would suggest crossing a reverse fantasy such as 'Rainbow's Quiet Riot' with a good red. I would prefer a coral red myself, but that would be a matter of personal preference. The F1 offspring are likely to be blues. Hopefully some of them would have inherited the reverse fantasy as a dominant trait. If there are F1 offspring with reverse fantasy, backcross them with the red parent. This should bring out the red coloration in around 50% of the offspring and hopefully some percentage of these would have white fantasy streaks. If a coral red parent was used, the probability of a coral red with white fantasy streaks will drop to around 6%.

If none of the F1 offspring have the reverse fantasy streaks (and I suggest growing out 50-75 offspring before reaching this conclusion), try crossing two of the best F1 plants together or self-pollinating your single best F1 plant. This has a much lower probability of getting red (about 25%). If the reverse fantasy trait is also inheriting as a recessive then the chance of red and reverse fantasy might be as low as 6% in the F2 offspring. If you started with a coral red parent, the chance of a coral red with reverse white fantasy streaks might be as low as 1% of the offspring. Here again, growing out a large number of F2 offspring would be critical to catching a plant with the desired combination of traits. (This is one of the reasons why hybridizers never seem to have enough shelf space.)

'Sport of Rainbow's Quiet Riot'

Q: How is the light dependent leaf variegation seen in some of the species such as clone tongwensis 3397 inherited?

A: I'm not sure that we know how this trait is inherited. I haven't seen any reports of crosses using these species. The trait only appears under certain growing conditions and in mature plants. One would have to grow seedlings out to maturity to see if the leaf color changes appeared. Sounds like a good project for someone with space and patience.

Q: Is flower size independent of plant size? I've seen a number of pictures of hybrids that seem to have very small plant size yet have enormous flowers.

A: There may be two things going on here. If you restrict the plant's growth, similar to that for bonsai, the plant size is reduced but the flowers will be full size. This is one way to get large flowers on a small plant. However, it appears that some hybridizers have been having success in selecting for combinations of small plant size but large flowers. As far as I know this is accomplished by selecting for this combination of traits for several generations, but there is the possibility of a new mutation being involved.

The combination is a very risky one as far as the plant is concerned. It takes a great deal of energy to produce flowers. The leaves are the plant's way to harvest energy from light and make food. If the size of the plant is reduced, the amount of available energy to the plant is reduced. If the plant uses a high percentage of the energy to produce large flowers, there isn't much energy left over for other purposes. I wouldn't be surprised if plants with this combination of traits bloom once then stall out on future growth or re-blooming. There just wouldn't be enough energy left over to sustain them afterwards. There is an attraction to having large blooms on small growing plants, but it's probably not a long term sustainable situation.

Suggestions for Writing a Design Schedule

By Paul Kroll

The Club and Show Chair need to decide the theme of the show before any writing can be done. Most important of all is a "workable" theme: one allowing for creative interpretation in various classes in the Design Division of the show. The Horticulture Division of the show rarely changes, but the Design Division and the Court of Honor are where the theme is interpreted. That is also an area on the SSA sheet where interpretation of theme is scored. If at all possible, move away from themes and class titles which revolve around geographical locations. Choose themes and class titles which are broad in scope, allowing the design exhibitors room for creativity as opposed to "interpreting" something which already exists.

A special note to remember is that your club need not have all three sections written into your schedule! It is possible to have only one, two, or all of these, depending upon your club members and their preferences. At least one of the following has to be included: Interpretive plant arrangements, Interpretive flower arrangements or Container Gardens. Remember there is no point score allotment on the container gardens score sheet, so they need not be titled.

Make a list of possible class titles relating to the chosen show theme. Keep the titles simple, even one word, rather than a long description which allows little freedom to the designers. For example: "A Year of African Violets" might have class titles with only the month of the year allowing the exhibitors to select whatever they wish to interpret happening in that month: January, snow and cold; February, Valentine's Day, etc. etc. Their subtitle of choice can be written on their 3 x 5 card.

When beginning to assign sizes to the design classes, keep in mind that it is very difficult to "fill" the larger niches with flower arrangements. Use the largest niches for the plant arrangements. It is also possible to have free-standing arrangements which are not staged in a niche. These need to have a note written stating, "must not exceed ____ inches in any dimension".

The show room looks best if the design section begins with the smaller niches in height and progresses to the larger and returning to the smaller. This setup looks better than a continuous larger/small design. The smaller niches and the underwater arrangements look best if they are elevated on a shelf above the table top. This is easy to stage with a board supported across a few carrying boxes and wrapped with the table coverings.

Speaking of underwater arrangements, since they must be staged in clear containers, it is a great advantage to have something clean and clear behind them as opposed to flocked wallpaper, fire alarm boxes, etc. This is not always possible, but think about it and strive to make that happen.

Underwater arrangements usually are separated into two types: the closed or inverted bowl (a true "bubble bowl") and the open, uncovered containers of various shapes. You may want to divide your underwater arrangement class in two: A. open and B. covered/inverted.

Be certain to state in your Design Division rules who is to be contacted for the design reservations, when reservations close, etc.

If you are hosting a show where many of the exhibitors are traveling a distance, you might consider having a "challenge class" where all the plant material, background, etc. is provided by the club. The exhibitor, after having requested a reservation for that class, brings/supplies only the mechanics necessary to execute their design. If this is planned, the exhibitors must gather together when the class title is revealed. They are given a bag with all their materials contained in it. They **must** use only the materials in that bag, but not

necessarily all of them. This is harder on the host club, but offers a good opportunity for designers who are flying in or traveling a long distance.

Another interesting possibility is to have a club project design. This can yield some newcomers to the design section and provide an extra added attraction for club members and the show itself. Perhaps an underwater arrangement, or a plant arrangement might be easiest to begin. Have a program at one of the meetings prior to the show where the class is discussed and have them try their hands at it. Perhaps this program should be a surprise one, if your club, like mine, chagrins the design programs. Some members won't even attend the meeting where those topics are presented!

It is my intention that this article and the suggestions therein will be of help to clubs wanting to write a design schedule that will enhance their shows and challenge the exhibitors to enter and do their best. Whenever I address design topics I always end with the statement: Growing is great, but designers have the most fun!

Join us at the
AVSA National Convention in Orlando, FL
May 28 - June 4, 2017

Passing Along the Passion for Growing

By Karen Kennedy

The Garden State African violet club (GSAVC) membership is growing beyond its club motto "*Friendship through Violets.*"

Club members are passing along their passion for growing to their children and grandchildren, as a healthy and inexpensive way to develop a love of these beautiful plants. Inspiring children and adults to enjoy plants can give them a healthy hobby for their entire lives.

The rules for making meetings fun and exciting apply to all generations, but if children find the meetings fun, everyone benefits. Organizing interesting club meeting programs, especially those that are interactive, will make members want to come back for more.

GSAVC added many new members this year, some who travel forty miles to attend meetings.

Mass mailings are sent to current, past, and future members, announcing the fall schedule. The club also relies on word of mouth, and interested show visitors to grow its membership.

Other ways we bring in new members? Not surprisingly, some of the interactive activities, like the April "Hands-on Design Challenge" lead by Grace E. Rarich, a middle school science teacher. She convinced several young members to participate in the '2016 Violets Rock' Show and Sale last spring.

Katie Ferguson Best Novice with Orchard Bumble Magnet

Seven-year old Katie Ferguson, daughter of the club President, Tim Ferguson, decided to join the club after attending several meetings of the 2015-2016 season.

"Dad grows violets and they are pretty," said the home-schooled Katie, who earned a First Place ribbon in May for her dish garden design.

"I created the dish garden all by myself but my Dad did remind me of the rules about figurines, so I removed them."

Best Dish Garden Katie Ferguson

Katie also won Best Novice for growing 'Orchid's Bumble Magnet.'

Frankie Bal, stepson to 2016 Show Chair and former club President, Paula Bal, joined the club this past winter and wound up taking home multiple ribbons for his underwater feature, themed *Psychedelic.*

As a thirteen year-old, Frankie was very surprised to win Best in Design, Best Underwater Arrangements, Tri-color In Design, and countless other ribbons. He found creating the design very challenging and rewarding. "I used colorful clay and molded it in a certain wavy pattern, and was

Frankie Bal

glad the design stayed together."

While he won't reveal all his design secrets, Frankie did use 'trial and error' to get his design perfect. The 8th grader's hard work paid off. He especially liked how the violet magnified under water, and is looking forward to creating more designs and growing plants next year.

Frankie Bal Design

Like Katie, Frankie finds the meetings fun, and recognizes that club members are patient, and take time to explain the science behind what makes plants grow in a way that he and others can understand.

Frankie Bal Best in Design

If your club is like most, membership growth is a constant challenge. Increased membership adds to your club's ability to stay viable. Try expanding membership to the younger generation to bring fresh ideas and different perspectives. You won't be disappointed.

Katie Ferguson's Awards

First Place
Best Novice

Frankie Bal's Awards

Tricolor In Design
Best in Design
Best Underwater Arrangement
Best Arrangement
Best Interpretive Floral Arrangement
Best In Class
First Place

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

RS-Ogon Zhelanie ('Fire of Desire')

Exhibited by: *Donna Turner*

Hybridized by: *S. Repkina*

Standard

Contest Entry

Reviving Your Interest in African Violets

By Janet Sierzega

It always bothers me when a club member who is successful in growing award-winning plants, decides to stop growing. The words, "I shut off the lights and walked away" linger in my mind.

Yet, I too have been tempted. When I worked from home I would look at my plants daily and put some aside that needed more attention than just taking off a leaf or pinching a bud. This routine was accompanied by morning coffee just prior to turning on the computer for a day of work. I was hard put to answer the question of how long it took me to take care of my collection, aka "obsession." I probably never noticed I was watering plants five days a week, because I would rotate watering my plants based on location. Evenings or weekends I would tend to the plants that needed repotting or what I call a "neckectomy."

Then my company left the state, I got a new job with an hour commute (more if traffic or weather intervened). The plants were on automatic pilot. I was shocked that I had any plants to exhibit at my next club show. Of course, I did not abide by the adage LIMIT YOUR COLLECTION. I heard this every episode of All About African Violets, from Adrienne Rieck (Annie). Other advice from her was heeded more easily. I always made time for her podcasts and miss them tremendously.

So what to do? My collection did not diminish. Thanks to the generosity of Paul Kroll, who gave leaves to students at the Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society (MAAVS) Convention Judging School, and Leaf Bingo at the AVC of Morris County, I now had more leaves. I keep my plant count down by not counting starter leaves until I plant them up. The leaves grow in zip-lock baggies, and get larger before I give them their own pot/place in the collection. I took another suggestion from club members, and became "ruthless." If the plant was not growing in my conditions, out it went! If it was in good condition I donated any duplicate plants, not just leaves, to the club Show/Sale table.

I realized how growing interest could be revived when you cannot bear to limit the collection. I began to specialize and focus on different plants each club show cycle. Semi-miniature violets seemed like a good idea. I had been growing standards but now would have more space to grow and I could learn to master the smaller plant. In the process there was some self-selection by the plants, so culling them was easier. The one type of plant I do successfully limit is miniatures, because they need more attention than I can give.

The next focus was growing more species under the illusion they required less care. Wrong! I did manage to get a Best Species award, and was striving to get three species for a collection entry. This is still a goal. I am more attentive to the shaping of the species while growing and timing of the blossoms, since they like to fall off just before show.

Goals are good since they help maintain my growing interest, and I keep changing my goals as needed to sustain my interest. Surprisingly, as I have limited, but not eliminated growing standards, they are larger than ever before. No worries here or constant measuring to see if my mature 8" plants meet the newer 9" rule for show judging.

I find visiting with other growers to see their plant-growing area inspirational. Where do they grow, how do they water, what plants do they grow and how do they manage pest control? Many club members do not welcome showing off

their growing areas. This is certainly a positive when club members host a meeting or get-together in their home. This is one club aspect in which online forums cannot compete.

Emilia Rykowski, the current President of the AVS of Morris County, has been gracious in inviting members to her home prior to a show, to make dish gardens. The first thing I noticed in arriving at her home was the beautiful plant stand in her kitchen. Other members invited a few of us to see their outdoor garden. Indoors they use a shelf with a shop light over their washing machine and dryer for African violets and other gesneriads and one window sill for dish garden plants. All are award-winning growers. More plant parties or club scheduled visits to members' homes may be revitalizing to the host, as well as the guests. Workshops at a club meeting encourage hands-on experience with some new aspect of growing or design while the more experienced growers assist.

As an AVSA Judge, I also take inspiration from attending the National Convention, Regional Shows, and visiting or judging other club shows. The exchange of growing information is wonderful.

I keep the temptation to purchase too much by taking my "Wish List" to any show. This list includes plants I have seen in the shows and want to grow; plants pictured in AVM; especially plants listed in the AVM March/April issue featuring Tally Time. I pay special attention to plants grown in my geographical division (Region III). The club members of the AVS of Philadelphia can attest to my joy in purchasing '*Cirelda*', a long sought after trailer. Now I can focus on growing trailers.

You can add diversity by focusing on design, which does not require an ongoing time commitment or display creativity in making the court of honor or educational displays for the club show. Research an area of interest and present at a club meeting or write an AVSA article. Both can be done on your own timetable and may help maintain your African violet interest, while on a sabbatical from growing a large collection.

If your interest wanes, make your collection more manageable. Become ruthless (if you have more courage than I do) in discarding those plants that do not grow well for you, and limit new purchases to those you really want, or that will grow well in your region. Develop a focus on a new specialty (miniatures; trailers; species; variegated plants, etc).

Also, delay potting up leaves until they are much bigger and you have the room and time to add them to the collection. Develop a special focus for the next show cycle – specialize in a particular plant type, set yourself a growing goal, know how much time you can devote to grooming and watering your plants. To prevent being overwhelmed or having to see the results of neglected plants, visit club members' growing areas or schedule a meeting around how people arrange their growing area, and how they manage their time for plant care. Keep it social - attend meetings and visit other clubs' shows. Keep a "wish list" of plants for purchase, keeping in mind winners for your geographic area. When you "fall in love" with a new plant, before purchasing it, ask yourself if it is because the plant reminds you of something you already have, where would you grow the plant, and does it allow you to enter a different show category than the plants at home.

The best feedback for your time and effort are healthy blooming plants. Keep it rewarding and enjoy growing!

Happy Holidays

2016 AVM Library Message

By Anne Nicholas, *Chairman*
AVSA Library Committee

Your AVSA Library Committee continues to work to provide educational and entertaining products to our membership. New items are now available on our AVSA website for both personal use and affiliate programming needs. Go to www.avsa.org and follow links to the Library page to access these products. A recent addition includes video coverage of a "Walk Through" of the Design division at the national show in Albuquerque. Two outstanding judges and designers, Paul Kroll and B.J. Ohme, are filmed as they tour and comment on the designs. Their comments are definitely teaching and learning tools for both designers and other judges. The Library section of the website also has the Walk-Through of the Design division at the Kansas City show, and an edited version of the Design Derby that was one of the most popular presentations at the Kansas City show in 2015.

As in past years, the Library committee has produced a DVD that features the winners of the current national AVSA show. Content of the national show in Albuquerque is offered on both a DVD and on a thumbdrive this year. The DVD and thumbdrive will showcase the top winners in the show, new introductions, and interviews. Check the website, the magazine, social media for information on availability and for other information about other new products from the Library committee. New products in the pipeline include the presentation at the Kansas City convention on Growing Trailers by Ben Haning. Also, the presentation at Albuquerque by Debbie McInnis on how to grow winning show plants will become available. Our Library members, Paula Bal and Penny Smith-Kerker, will make sure these programs are advertised on Social Media. Library Committee members, Tom Glembocki and Barb Burde, will post information on the website as they become available.

As always, the Library committee members freely donate time and talent both at and between conventions. I am grateful for all their work, energy, and enthusiasm. I also want to thank Phil Wallace who has been invaluable in the editing and producing of our AVSA YouTube videos and other video and script content of our products. I do not see most of the AVSA Library committee members except once a year at convention. It is always like a wonderful family reunion. Our AVSA Library Committee Members include: Paula Bal, Marjorie Bullard, Barbara Burde, Janet Castiglione, Libbie Glembocki, Tom Glembocki, Julie Jones, Penny Smith-Kerker, Richard Nicholas, and Andrea Worrell.

BOYCE EDENS RESEARCH FUND

Karen Broadway - Chairman • 10028 N. 58th Lane • Glendale, AZ 85302-1334
Donations received from June 1, 2016 – August 31, 2016 • Total $204.00

Geneva - $100 - $499
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AVSA's BEST VARIETY LIST FOR 2016

Compiled by John Carter
1825 W Lincoln St, Broken Arrow, OK 74012
bestvarieties@avsa.org

Welcome to AVSA's 2016 Best Variety List. Thank you to all who participated. I hope that as more members learn of the online submission procedure we will see participation increase. Participation picked up this year. The last several selections made the list with only 3 votes. You may submit your 2017 selections now. Any submissions received between now and September 1, 2017 will be included in the 2016 report.

Again this year we list each of the top twenty-five favorites with their descriptions from AVSA's First Class computer data base. Now to YOUR choices for the 2016 List. Read the list, read the descriptions and choose your new favorites for your collection. We have several changes to the list this year.

Precious Red (9724) 01/15/2007 (H. Pittman) Semidouble-double dark red pansy. Dark green, plain/red back. Miniature

Rob's Chilly Willy (9461) 07/30/2005 (R. Robinson) Double silver-white star/medium blue overlay, edge. Crown variegated medium green and white, pointed. Miniature

Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler(8745) 07/27/1998 (P. Hancock) Semidouble bright pink ruffled pansy/variable raspberry fantasy; raspberry edge. Variegated dark green, cream and pink, plain, glossy/red back. Large (DAVS 1621)

Cajun's Fair Maiden (10636) 12/07/2013 (B. Thibodeaux) Semidouble-double pink frilled pansy/darker eye, variable thin raspberry sparkle edge. Variegated dark green, cream and pink, plain, heart-shaped, quilted. Standard

Frozen in Time (9167) 02/03/2003 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano) Single-semidouble white pansy/variable lavender tinge; green edge. Variegated light green and ivory, quilted. Standard

Ness' Crinkle Blue (8136) 01/19/1995 (D. Ness) Double dark blue star/variable thin white edge. Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back. Semiminiature

Rob's Boolaroo (8053) 03/05/1994 (R. Robinson) Semidouble light pink sticktite pansy/bright blue fantasy. Medium green, quilted. Semiminiature trailer

Jersey Snow Flakes (9820) 12/14/2007 (R. Kurzynski) Single-semidouble white pansy/white sparkle overlay. Variegated medium green and white, plain, quilted. Standard

Optimara Little Ruby (6957) 11/19/1988 (Holtkamp) Single-semidouble purple-red. Medium green, ovate, pointed, hairy, glossy. Miniature

Yukako – unknown/from Japan – sticktite single starts of blue with green center stripes. Medium green quilted foliage. Standard.

Buckeye Celebration (8879) 08/10/2000 (P. Hancock) Semidouble light purple star/dark purple and cranberry fantasy, cranberry ruffled edge. Variegated dark green, pink and cream, plain/red back. Large (DAVS 1616)

Buckeye Nostalgia (10484) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble pale blue ruffled pansy. Variegated medium green and cream. Standard (DAVS 1753)

Buckeye Seductress (9669) 07/13/2006 (P. Hancock) Double dark lavender star/wide white band, green edge. Variegated medium green and cream, plain. Large (DAVS 1632)

Cajun's Lil Joy (10639) 12/07/2013 (B. Thibodeaux) Semidouble pink pansy/darker mottling. Variegated medium green, cream and pink, plain/red back. Semiminiature

Funambule (9660) 06/08/2006 (N. Robitaille/D. Croteau) Semidouble dark blue pansy/white and pink fantasy. Variegated dark green and pink, plain. Standard (CA)

Irish Flirt (7577) 11/07/1991 (S. Sorano)

Double bright green and white frilled star. Medium green, wavy. Semiminiature

Jersey Girl Trail (10374) 11/22/2010 (R. Kurzynski) Single-semidouble fuchsia pansy. Medium green girl foliage. Miniature trailer

Jolly Orchid (9719) 01/15/2007 (H. Pittman) Double orchid and white pansy. Medium green, plain, quilted. Miniature (TX Hyb, DAVS 1661)

Kentucky Gooseberries (D. Rollins) Double white star/light pink blush. Medium green, serrated. Semiminiature (DAVS 1602)

Optimara Little Hopi II (8958) 01/31/2001 (Holtkamp) Single-semidouble pink/purple fantasy. Medium green, plain, pointed, glossy, hairy/red back. Semiminiature

Persian Prince (8266) 07/28/1995 (S. Sorano) Semidouble medium blue pansy. Medium green, ovate, scalloped girl foliage. Miniature

Picasso (6924) 10/04/1988 (M. Tremblay) Double light blue and white/variable white fantasy. Variegated medium green, plain/silver-green back. Large (CA)

Rainbow's Quiet Riot (R. Wasmund) Semi-double blue-purple large star/white fantasy. Dark green, round, scalloped. Standard

Rebel's Splatter Kake (8695) 01/31/1998 (R. Bann) Single-semidouble pink large fluted star/darker eye, purple fantasy, white-green edge. Medium green, spooned, quilted, glossy, serrated/red back. Large

Rob's Antique Rose (8451) 05/23/1996 (R. Robinson) Semidouble silver-rose sticktite frilled pansy/darker shading, some silver-green tips. Dark green, pointed, glossy, serrated/red back. Semiminiature

Membership Makes a Great Gift!

AVSA Article Contest

3rd Place Winner will receive a total of **eight** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

2nd Place Winner will receive a total of **sixteen** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

1st Place Winner will receive a total of **thirty-two** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **Contest Rules** are as follows:

1. ALL entered articles must be Original Work, and cannot have been published before.
2. You may write as many articles as you wish, and each entry must be marked, **CONTEST.**
3. **Cutoff date for entries is April 1, 2017.** ***Articles received after this date will NOT be considered.***
4. Hybridizers, Commercial Members, and Judges, taking part, are not eligible to receive prizes.
5. The decisions of the Judges will be FINAL.
6. Due to the high cost of shipping leaves internationally, leaves will only be shipped to winners in the US. International members will be required to pick them up at the 2017 Orlando Convention.

AVSA BOOSTER FUND

Dianna Walston • 2210 S. Courtland Ave. • Kokomo, IN 46902
November 1, 2015 to August 31, 2016 • Donations Total: $2,238.34

Geneva - $100-$499

Carol Allegretti, Fort Myers, FL
Johnnie Berry, Little Rock, AR
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Marge Farrand, Ann Arbor, MI
Karen Plourde, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA
Sylvia Singh, Tiburon, CA
Caroline Storey, San Marcos, TX

Multicolor - $50-$99

Nancy Braun, Madison, WI
Heidi Dillenbeck, Delanson, NY
In memory of Irwin Wagman
Barbara Greenawalt, Richmond AVS, Glen Allen, VA
On behalf of the judges for our April show: Sue Hoffmann, Pat Knight, Andrew Norris, Linda Abplanalp, Libbie and Tom Glembocki
Pat Lesnansky, Culver City Gesneriad Society, Santa Monica, CA
In memory of Elaine Re
Emilia Rykowski, AVC of Morris County
In lieu of travel expenses for judges at annual show: Margaret Califano, Grace Egan, Elmer Godney, Carolyn Klein, Perry Moore, Janice Murasko, Donna Palagonia, Joseph Palagonia, Claire Schirtzer

Two Tone - $25-$49

AVSA New Mexico, Annonymous Donation
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In lieu of speaker's fee for Susan Gruden
Gary Saunders, Columbus AVS, Grove City, OH
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In memory of Audrey J. Saizman
Donna Williams, Spring Branch AVC, Missouri City, TX

Thumbprint - Under $25

Susan Arnao, AVC of Burlington County, Ocean City, NJ
In lieu of judges fees for Marianne Gershon, Bob Kurzynski, Jan Murasko, Judy Smith
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AVSA HONOR ROLL OF AFRICAN VIOLETS

Compiled by John T Carter
1825 West Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012 • bestvarieties@avsa.org

1997
Ode to Beauty #7677 (Cox/B. Johnson)
Picasso #6924 (M. Tremblay)

1998
Ness' Crinkle Blue #8136 (D. Ness) International n/r (B. Johnson)

1999
Milky Way Trail #7469 (J. Stahl) Ness' Satin Rose #8144 (D. Ness)

2000
Powwow #7708 (K. Stork)
Rob's Sticky Wicket #6467 (R. Robinson)

2001
Windy Day #7719 (Stork/Boone)

2002
There were no 2002 additions to the Honor Roll of African Violets

2003
Rainbow's Ouiet Riot (R. Wasmund)

2004
Frozen in 'Time #9167 (S. Sorano)
Orchard's Bumble Magnet #8479 (R. Wilson)

2005
Rebel's Splatter Kake #8695 (R. Bann)

2006
There were no 2006 additions to the Honor Roll of African Violets

2007
ACA'S Red Ember #8732 (J. Brownlie)

2008
Blue Dragon #9516 (LLyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano)

2009
Bob Serbin #8292 (J. Brownlie)

2011
Plumberry Glow #9187 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano)
Aca's Red Ember (#8732) (J. Brownlie)

2012
There are no additions to the Honor Roll of Violets

2013
Harbor Blue #6174 (T. Weber)

2014
Rob's Chilly Willy #8170 (R. Robinson)
Rob's Fuddy Duddy #7886 (R. Robinson)

2015-2016
There are no additions to the Honor Roll of Violets

To see the Honor Roll listings from 1960 - 1998, refer to pages 26 & 27 of the May/June 2000 AVM.
To be in the Honor Roll of African Violets, a variety must have appeared in the Best Varieties list for three consecutive years.
(Minor editorial changes have been made on some of the above cultivars for compliance with the current MVL)

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Plumberry Glow

Exhibited by: *Debbie McInnis*

Hybridized by: *Sorano/LLyon Greenhouses*

Semiminiature

Dimetris Streps

are Hybridized in Ukraine

By Pavel Enikeev

DS - Ladies' Logic

DS - Metior Shower

DS - Rabit Cost

DS - Red and The Black - 1

Contest Entry

IF I COULD HAVE ONLY ONE AFRICAN VIOLET

By Bruce Pearson

Saintpaulia ionantha

So thankful and blessed I am not forced into this position with plenty of space to house my ever growing collection. But what if? Can you even imagine? There is so much choice today with First Class software showing over 18,000 varieties!

Let's see, do I want to pick a large standard, a standard, a compact standard, semi miniature, or miniature. How about chimeras? Then there is the choice of regular or variegated foliage, and within the variegated "category" is mosaic, crowned and Tommie Lou.

Just trying to make this decision is a challenge. Now the flower colors. Blue, purple, pink, red, lavender, white, green, yellow and all shades and combinations in between. This does not look like it is going to get easier.

The AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges lists African violet blossom types as:

Single, double, semi double flowers with frilled, pansy, star, ruffled , bell, fantasy, fringed, edged, Geneva, bicolor, tri color and wasp to list most of them and I am sure I am leaving out several more flower types. Then there are combinations within this group. Choices, choices, choices.

Next can we make a choice on foliage types? African violet foliage ranges in color from light green through dark burgundy green with markings on variegated foliage adding white, cream, light yellow, grey, and rosy shades from light pink to deep wine red. Besides foliage color the leaves make the plant so distinctive. The more common foliage types are:

Plain or tailored also known as standard or boy type foliage

Girl foliage with deeply scalloped leaves, usually rounded or heart-shaped with white to yellow markings at the base of each leaf which can extend to the leaf blades . (I love this foliage but hope I am not giving away my choice)

These are heavily crested leaves with the leaf edges curled forward or bent back with exaggerated wavy edges resembling holly leaves in form.

Longifolia or Spider foliage is narrow pointed strap-like leaves with plain or wavy edges. Interesting indeed.

Quilted leaves have distinct raised areas between the veins and all sorts of variations.

Ruffled, Fringed, Wavy and fluted leaves add to the choices. These have serrated or ragged edges.

Supreme leaves are thick, hairy, and quilted with strong pencil-like petioles

Spooned leaves are another favorite of mine with leaves cupped up like a spoon. Gee, again, I hope I am not giving away my choice. But as I questioned in the first paragraph.....can you imagine?

So much has happened just within my lifetime. Although the ten original hybrids introduced by the greenhouses of Armacost & Royston were before my time. Pink flowers, and then untold colors of every hue have been released. Non dropping flowers or "stick tights occurred in 1965. Miniature and semi miniature plants came into existence. I can still remember the sensation Tommie Lou, the first variegated violet, caused in

the horticultural community. Can you imagine, the Tinari's were asking an outrageous $1.25 for a plant, while everything else was being sold for 45 to 65 cents? I am thankful I still have several of their catalogs.

Every year new developments occur. Flowers bigger than golf balls are not uncommon. Additional flower stems for more flowers are showing up on newer hybrids. My garden center customers ask for ever bigger flowers and for scented ones. Is this in the future?

But, there is ONE plant or certainly a small number of plants with all this beauty hidden in its genetics. That plant is the one found in Nature.

Saintpaulia ionantha, the original African violet, and perhaps a couple of others, have contributed to all this beauty we enjoy today. Who could imagine everything we enjoy today about modern day African violets is hidden within the makeup of this species? I can just look at this simple little violet and imagine all the beauty and history within. You can't do that with any of the hybrids. It rightfully deserves a choice spot in my collection.

I can look at this plant and envision Baron Walter von Saint Paul trekking his way through virgin cloud forest in Tanzania in 1892. Feasting his eyes on this little forest dwelling hairy leafed beauty. I am sure he had no idea what impact it would have in modern day ornamental horticultural circles. I can see him with a bag full of unseen plants at the time. I reflect back on my experiences collecting plants in South America, Central America, Mexico, Asia, and Africa, now no longer legal in most countries. I so miss it.

I wonder how Baron St. Paul ever got the seeds or plants shipped to his father in Germany as there certainly was not the post office or FedEx back then. The airplane had not even been invented. Lucky for us his father was well connected in horticultural circles and shared his plants. Plants were soon being offered in Germany and England, and I am sure spread rapidly throughout Europe.

It is reported that as early as 1893 the first commercially produced plants were being offered by a man known as Ernst Benary, of Erfurt, Germany.

In 1926, Armacost & Royston of Los Angeles, California imported African violet seeds from Europe. They used the resulting plants to develop ten new hybrids. This leaves a question in my mind. Did "Walter" collect and distribute other species and just what was in the original shipment that A & M received from Europe? Hope they did not have as much trouble getting the plants or seeds through USDA in California as I have experienced. Thankfully, the original ten clones made by A & M are still available today. Admiral, Amethyst, Blue Boy, Commodore, Mermaid, Neptune, Norseman, Sailor Boy, Viking and # 32. All of these are on my "must acquire list" along with the species *S. pusilla*.

Although no one will ever know if the violets my great aunt and grandmother grew on their windowsills in Kansas back in the 40's and 50's was an actual species or an early hybrid, I can still feel the pride and enjoyment they received from having this exotic tropical beauty enhance their lives particularly in the dead of winter. Thank you Aunt Leah and "Grams" for instilling the love of plants and the beauty of Nature within me.

It is amazing and a reflection of the need for man to tinker, tweak and modify things around him. The African violet has been in the hands of collectors and growers for almost 130 years. This simple blue flowered plant has been transformed into a plant I am sure today "Walter" would have a hard time recognizing as the outcome of his discovery.

I hope I have inspired others to share some space on their windowsills for the species.

On a footnote: It is my understanding that African violets in the wild were never an abundant species. They are now endangered or possibly critically endangered due to ever occurring habitat loss and the simple gathering of wood for fuel. Possibly other factors are also in play. I must disagree with environmentalists that swear plant collection is the culprit. I find this extremely difficult to believe since the plants are so easy to propagate in cultivation. But for whatever reason, we should all save a space on our shelves for at least one species. Let's don't let them disappear.

Ness' Satin Rose

Exhibited by: *Patricia Gibson*
Hybridized by: *D. Ness*
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Shirl's Hawaiian Lei

Exhibited by: *Anne Nicholas*
Hybridized by: *S. Sanders*
Miniature

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

K's Slingshot

Exhibited and Hybridized by: *Kathy Hajner*

Standard

An Explanation of Design Terminology

By Edna Rourke

The design section in an African violet show has terminology that can be both intimidating and confusing to exhibitors especially those new to our hobby. In order to interpret the schedule, it may be helpful to get familiar with some of the terms used and it may also make constructing a design using the proper components easier.

Understanding what is or is not allowed can make a difference in the award an exhibit may receive.

Some questions and answers can often help an exhibitor. I hope the following will be helpful:

Q. What is meant by artificial plant material?

A. It is manufactured material that resembles natural plant material. It is not allowed in shows.

Q. What is a background?

A. It is the surface behind the arrangement.

Q. What is an underlay?

A. It is something used beneath the design. (Not a base) It could be a contrasting piece of material, either in color, etc., or it may be a continuation of the background material. It could also be fabric, paper, etc.

Q. What is a base?

A. It is anything under the container. It could be a mat, a piece of wood or a stand, etc. The underlay is not a base.

Q. What is a component?

A. Is the materials that the designer/exhibitor has used to create the design; such as the container, plant material, mechanics and background. The optional components are usually bases, accessories.

Q. What is a container?

A. It is anything used to hold the plant material.

Q. What is driftwood?

A. It is also known as decorative wood.

Q. What is decorative wood?

A. Included in this category are dried branches, limb or trunk pieces, root pieces, cypress knees, or any parts of a tree that has been altered by nature. Included here may be wood whose surface has been varnished waxed or treated otherwise, if so permitted by the schedule.

Q. What is dried plant material?

A. Any plant material that has had the moisture removed from it.

Q. What is Fresh plant material?

A. It is any part, cut from a living plant, that has been conditioned and is not wilted.

Q. What is a feature in a design?

A. It is the most dominant object in a design. The schedule must state the fact that a particular thing is to be featured.

Q. What is the "frame of reference"?

A. It is the outside dimensions or border of the exhibit.

Q. What is a holder?

A. It is any type of mechanic that will hold and control plant material in an arrangement.

Q. What are mechanics?

A. Anything used to construct your design that will hold and control the plant material.

Q. What is a niche?

A. It is a space which has been recessed.

Q. What is a holder?

A. It is any type of mechanic that will hold and control plant material in an arrangement.

Q. What is a pin holder?

A. It is a mechanic used to hold plant material in a design.

Q. What is a cup pin holder?

A. It is a pin holder attached in a well shape, round or square, oblong, etc., that will hold water, as well as plant material.

Q. What is meant by conformance?

A. This means that the exhibitor must follow the rules of the schedule.

Q. What is an oasis?

A. It is synthetic material that must be soaked in water, will retain water, and support plant material in an arrangement.

Q. What is floral tape?

A. It is a stretchable, self-sticking tape used to cover wire, attach small floral tubes to stems and to cover straws that may hold flower stems.

Designs Bits and Pieces... Part I - Accessories

By Edna Rourke

What is an accessory?

An accessory is described as something optional, extra, and/or added to help in a secondary way.

Accessories in an African violet show, if they are permitted, are used in the design division to add to the attractiveness, or to the effect. The Show Schedule should clearly state whether or not an accessory is permitted, as well as in which class, or classes, it/they may be used. An accessory can only be used *when specified in the Show Schedule*. It is something that has been added to the plant material, mechanics, container, background and/or the base. It should not, however, be the focal point of the design unless it is so stated.

An accessory should serve some purpose or function. For instance, it can be used to help balance the design, express a feeling or a mood, and it may sometimes be used to help interpret either the theme or a class title.

When choosing an accessory, the same principles of design apply. Shape, color, size, texture, and, if it is appropriate, are all factors to be considered. Be careful in your choice of an accessory. Remember it should be in harmony, as well as in a realistic proportion with the rest of the design. PLEASE, do not depend upon an accessory alone to supply the interpretation of the theme, or particular class. It should only be a small part of the overall design.

When creating a design where an accessory is to be used, a base to hold all of it together should be a consideration as it will unite all of the components.

Placement is also very important. An accessory can be placed beside an arrangement and when used in this way, it does not determine the height or shape of a design. It can also be used within the design. If your accessory is tall, it can help to create the line of the design, thereby reducing the amount of plant material necessary. It can also be placed within the design, but subtly; again, keeping in mind it should not be the focal point, unless so stated.

There are many things that may be used as accessories. The following is a list of some materials you may want to consider using:

boxes	books	candles	collectibles
driftwood	figurines	minerals	rocks
tools	paintings	plastics	ornaments
shells	knickknacks	photographs, etc.	

The possibilities are endless and only limited to *your* imagination.

Sinningia 'Colorado Sunset'

Exhibited by: *Elaine Niece*

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

Photo Credit: **Erika Geimonen**

'Senk's Snowy Egret'

Grown and Photographed by:
Erika Geimonen
Hybridized by:
R. Follett & D. Senk
Variegated Standard Trailer

Photo Credit: **Neil Lipson**

'Ma's Debutant'

Exhibited by: *Susan Arnao*

Hybridized by: *O. Robinson*

Standard

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Beauties from Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses

Photos by: Paul Sorano

Black Tie Affair

Coming-Up-Roses

Day-'N' Night

Geyser-of-Color

Hawaiian-Cloud

Lilliana

"And the winners are ..."

By Mary J. Corondan
434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

CINCINNATI/DAYTON AVS, OH – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Waterdancer, Lacy Lass, Ode to Beauty; Best Trailer: Rob's Gundaroo, **Pat Gibson.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Granger's Mexicali Rose, Mac's Kismet's Knight, Jolly Orchid; Best Miniature: Hummingbird Kisses; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Penny Wichman.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Pink Dove, Rob's Twinkle Blue, Knight Magic; Best Semiminiature: Little Axel, **Debbie McInnis.** Best in Show/Best Standard: Rebel's Minnesota Haze, **Linda Lloyd.** Best Species: *S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, **Al Cenci.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Blue Ice', **Vicki Ferguson.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Mel Grice.**

OTTAWA AVS, ONTARIO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Especially Mine, Buckeye Narcissistic, Christine Diane; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Especially Mine; Best Species: *S.* 5cl clone *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397, **Eileen McGrath.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Moonstone, Jolly Blue Bells, Dean's Rosalie; Best Miniature: Dean's Rosalie, **Sayeh Beheshti.** Best Species Collection: *S.* 5a clone *grandifolia* No. 237, *S.* 8 clone Cha Simba, *S.* 5c1 clone *tongwensis*; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Mini Sota; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Fernwood's Cherry Jubilee', **Lorna Russell.** Best Trailer: Kesha; Best Design, **Diane Page.** Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Madeline Kalinowski.** Design Sweepstakes, **Sandy Black.**

SAINTPAULIA SOCIETY OF LONG ISLAND, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Harbor Blue, Omaha Thunder, Jersey Snow Flakes; Best Standard: Harbor Blue; Best Species: *Saintpaulia confusa*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Carolyn Klein.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Newtown Gertrude Horabito, The Alps; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Irish Flirt, Rob's Ooey Gooey, Rob's Fuddy Duddy; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fuddy Duddy; Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina longgangensis*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Joe Palagonia.** Best in Show/Best Trailer: Ramblin' Amethyst, **Edward Bradford.**

Contest Entry

Winter White is Not a Great Violet Look

By Beth Baker, DNP

Frequently you will see a post on Facebook that features an all-white violet. Sometimes it is a question about how to "green up" a variegated violet. Despite fashion advisors pushing winter white clothing, for a violet it can mean death. Those of us that have grown violets for a long time, realize no green equals no chlorophyll equals no energy. This is a recipe for the sudden demise of your plant.

I have grown African violets for over twenty-five years. I have never had trouble with variegated plants turning all white. Then I moved into a 110-year-old house with high ceilings and original wood floors...and drafty windows and fireplaces. My house runs about 84 degrees in the summer and 65 degrees in the winter. Before we moved, I had taken a sabbatical from growing. When I resumed after moving to this location, I got some variegated plants. They looked great in the summer. Then winter came. By the end of winter, they looked like this:

I increased my fertilizer and turned to my fastest source of information - Facebook groups. Epsom Salts was the overwhelming response, guaranteed to work. The amount of Epsom salts varied – so I went with the highest dose, figuring I sure couldn't make things worse. I took some serial pictures to capture the triumphant return of 'Fisherman's Paradise.' The plant struggled on. I turned to several other experienced growers. They also had sure-fire ways of fixing this issue with fish emulsion or doming. None of which changed a thing. Weeks later it looked like this:

I also tried moving it to a warmer place. My plant died. Summer in Memphis usually starts in May. It was much warmer, but it was too late. My plant collapsed days after this picture was taken. It was domed in a warm spot with extra nitrogen. It died, because it had no chlorophyll, no energy to make green crown leaves. Just a word here, the green outer leaves on my plant slowly died off during the spring, or they would still be on the plant. If you still have some green leaves, DO NOT REMOVE THEM.

When something doesn't go as I expect, I spend time analyzing the situation. As I reflected on this problem I realized, like people, one solution does not fit all plants. I basically had thrown high blood pressure medicine at a patient that needed antibiotics. If your plant has a magnesium deficiency, Epsom salts is great. If you have not fertilized, fish emulsion or a high nitrogen fertilizer gives an extra boost of nitrogen. But if that is not the problem, it does not work.

When your plant turns white, you really need to look at what changed, or is missing in your growing area. Did it get cold? Is the heat on making the area drier? Have you skipped fertilizing? Have you just been using bloom booster [oops]? Are you using a balanced fertilizer with trace elements?

Life gets busy, we throw water at our plants and run at times. They pout, and some turn yellow or white. You know your answer - fertilize. However, if you are using a good balanced fertilizer with trace elements every time you water, I would look at other causes, cause times awastin'. They won't wait forever while you figure this out.

Here are some suggestions. I do not presume to know everything about plants. I do know, if you try all of them at once, you will never know exactly what fixed it, but if your plant lives, then you have achieved your goal.

Most of my variegated violets fared better this

winter on higher shelves. If I want to pay the electric bill, my house has to remain cooler. There are some plants that just don't like these extreme conditions. I have lost two 'Fisherman's Paradise' even placed in my warmest winter spot. I don't have the heart to murder a 3rd. You can bet, it will be on my plant list if we ever move into another house.

Beth works at a Memphis Area Hospital and is an Assistant Professor at University Tennessee. She can be reached at bakerbethrn@gmail.com. She has grown violets since she was a child. Her favorites include Mac's and Russian/Ukrainian violets or...

Condition	Solution	Comments
I am supposed to fertilize them?	Use a good, well-balanced fertilizer with trace elements. Fish emulsion will also work but it is mostly nitrogen [see below].	Don't go crazy. Use 1/4 strength at the most. You don't want to burn them with fertilizer.
I just looked at my fertilizer. It does not contain trace elements.	Try Epsom Salts to increase magnesium. This can be found at your drug store. Then find a different fertilizer with trace elements.	I see varying recommendations. I would start low so you don't burn it [despite what I did]. 1 tsp Epsom Salts per gallon.
I have been using a low nitrogen fertilizer such as a bloom booster.	Stop! Bloom boosters should only be used for very short periods. Give a dose a fish emulsion and find a well balanced fertilizer with trace elements, that is NOT a bloom booster.	Bloom boosters usually have a lower first number and a high middle number: 12-36-14. You can literally sacrifice the plant for blooms, if you aren't careful.
It is Fall/Winter and my plant room is chilly.	Move your plant to a warmer location – it may just need to be on a higher shelf. Some people wrap thermal Mylar blankets on the cold [window] side of their shelf.	Basement growers may wrap Mylar around three sides.
The humidity in my plant room is low	Dome it. Central heat and air often decreases the humidity. You may need to add humidity by adding a water source to the shelves, or a humidifier.	I often use a clear disposable salad bowl propped on solo cups – it is not completely sealed but it increases the humidity enough without a seal.
My plant sits directly under the light.	Move it to the edge. Too much light for some varieties will bleach the leaves.	This is not a seasonal issue, but you may see it in combination with a seasonal issue.

Contest Entry

Do It Yourself LED Lights or Fun with LEDS

By Connie Rowley

Are you getting fed up with having to replace burnt out T-12, T-8 or T-5 bulbs on a regular basis? And then the fixture goes dead a short time later!

Poor plants – they didn't do it. You can't blame them. But they sure would appreciate a regular lighting schedule. And I can just see them trying to duck to avoid a bashing when the bulb gets dropped on them.

Enter LED lighting – a reasonably priced, effective lighting system, that will modernize your present stands and provide good light for your plants for years.

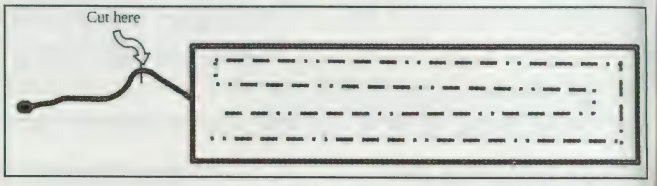
FIRST – Don't throw away the old burnt out fixture in disgust. Remember, we want something reasonably priced, so it will take a little, but only a little effort.

Start by assembling the bits and pieces needed. For a 4' x 2' shelf you need (see technical details at end of article for full information on the LEDS and power adapter):

Ready to start

- old burnt out 4' light fixture
- 12V DC 5 amp power adapter (preferably UL rated)
- 5 meter flexible LED light strip with 600 LED lights. I have been using bright white, but they are available in soft white, daylight, and others. Color makes very little difference in light output.
- a little electrical tape
- Scissors and a small screwdriver

Start by cutting the old wire off the fixture, leaving a piece about one foot long. You don't need the rest and don't want someone plugging it in by mistake and causing an accident.



Diagram

Place the LED strip in the fixture as in the diagram, but before you attach them, place a bit of electrical tape over any sharp edges as a precaution. There is a drop in brightness from one end of the strip to the other so this arrangement will give the most even distribution of light. The strip has it's own adhesive backing. Just wrap the ends as best as you can, treat the LED strip gently.

Right End

If a couple of lights get damaged, don't worry about them. The other five hundred and ninety or more will do just fine. (It would be a good idea to lay the light strip in place, adhering them with just a small bit of electrical tape while adjusting your layout. (Once the adhesive backing is removed from the lights, the contact adhesive is permanent.)

Now it's time to attach the light strip to the power adapter. Remember water and electricity aren't very compatible, so don't arrange the power

adapter to lay on the shelf or the floor. You could use a piece of plastic coated garden wire, not string, to tie it to the end post of your shelf. If you're not comfortable with a little electrical wiring, please get help from someone that is.

To make the most efficient use of the lights (get the maximum amount of light from them), we'll connect them in a ring circuit.

In a ring circuit, the red wires at each end of the light strip are connected together and then will be connected to the power adapter positive. Similarly the black wires will be connected to the power adapter negative. Remember connect red to red and black to black.

After the wires on the lights are attached to the connector that goes to the power adapter, it would be a good idea to tape these with electrical tape to the piece of wire you left from your old fixture. This will avoid tension on the light strip so it doesn't all pull loose.

Left End

This is it. Time to plug the assembly into an outlet and see if it works.

Finished

Now hang it up and plug into your timer, stand back and congratulate yourself for a job well done.

Everyone wants to know how much light you actually get out of this. Using a gray card and my camera, it appears to be about the same as with florescent 40 watt shop lights. The real test is in the appearance of the plants. After a year, mine look healthy and bloom nicely. You will also notice from the picture, that light is spread evenly across the entire shelf. This is due in part to the shape of the fixture. Another advantage, there is almost no heat dissipated from these lights. Note that only the center shelf of the stand has LED lights. The top and bottom shelf still have standard shop lights with 40W T-12 bulbs.

Plant Stand

Online you'll find the light strip costs less than $15 and the power adapter about $15 to $20. Costs will be much higher at the chain hardware stores. So for about $30 a shelf, you have a light set that will last for years. Electricity usage remains the same as measured with a power meter borrowed from the local library, so no savings in electric costs.

TECHNICAL DETAILS:

Lights

5 meter Super Bright SMD2835 600LED Non-Waterproof Flexible Light Strip. Although you would think waterproof to be more advisable, the extra coating means less available light.

Note: get the 2835 not the 3528. The 2835 are much brighter and use less power

Some strips come with bare wires and some with a soldered/wired 5.5mm x 2.1mm Female Connector.

If there is no power connector, you will need to get a 5.5mm x 2.1mm Female Connector Plug. When connecting remember red wire is + (positive) and black wire is - (negative).

The plugs and power adapters are the same kind that are used with many Computer LED Monitors and CCTV cameras.

Power Adapter

12V DC 5A with Male 5.5mm x 2.1mm Connector - center positive (UL listed if possible)

Don't skimp on the power adapter. Theoretically, you could get by with a lower powered one but it is more likely to burn out or possibly over heat. We also found it better to use a separate power adapter for each shelf due to the voltage drop caused by the extra load.

So what is the future for LED plant lighting and can I save electricity using them?

You could save electricity by limiting wavelengths to only those our plants need and crave. Far fewer bulbs would be needed. Hence less electricity to run them. But because these wavelengths include only red and blue colors, our plant stands and plant rooms would take on a 'night club' appearance and plants would *appear* to look very *unnatural*. Not good!!

However, it has been found that by adding only ten to fifteen percent white bulbs, you would achieve a light system most beneficial to plants AND having a pleasing appearance to the human eye while using a lower rate of energy. This would require a lot more work cutting and connecting different color light strips together.

Try an all white one first and then if you like it, get creative and start mixing colors.

Finally, I'd like to thank Hector Wong (facebook.com/hector.gesneriads) for his work with LED strip lighting which provided me with some very useful information and ideas on which to expand.

If you have further questions, feel free to contact me at: violetsrusmn@gmail.com

My Eureka Moment

By Barbara Brenchley

It started out as a thirty-minute job, something I decided to do to fill in time before I left for another appointment. It turned into a Two-day marathon!

I had two plants that I noticed had grown necks, so I lay everything out on the workbench; grooming tools, old basin, rubber gloves, potting mix, new wicks etc., and set to work. I noticed that the outer leaves were a little yellowy. They weren't old leaves, so they shouldn't have been fading like that.

This was nothing new. I had this trouble for about twelve months on varying plants and of course my thoughts have been – plants needs nitrogen, a dose of Epsom salts, pot needs leaching, the leaves are being bleached out by the lights on my stand, etc. – everything I could think of.

However, the job at hand was getting rid of those necks, and in view of the problems the Club has been facing with the pH of the potting mix, I wondered what the reading would be of the mix in these pots. I scraped a half teaspoon from the top of the first pot, tested it. It was okay, so I began to take the plant out in order to cut some of the root ball off.

It was then that it happened! *My Epiphanous Moment!* It dawned on me that maybe, just maybe, I should test the soil at the bottom of the root ball, too. So I scraped some soil free and tested it. Yes, you guessed it! How could I have been so stupid? Of course it might be a different reading, why, oh, why, didn't I think of this a long time ago?? Well, the reading was four at the bottom of the pot, and 6.5 at the top!

Now, I'm not sure whether the pH changed that much because of the accumulation of fertilizer salts but I doubt it because I regularly leach the pots when I'm changing the water in the wells, but who knows? It could be that I should pour two lots of lukewarm water through instead of one.

I ended up rejuvenating the plants concerned and testing both of them at the top of the pot and also at the bottom and the second pot tested the same as the first one. I ran out of time to be able to

investigate the rest of my collection then and there but I set aside a couple of days to go through all my plants to test the mix and sure enough, the pH level at the bottom of the pot almost always was out at a higher alkaline reading than it should have been.

So what! I hear you saying. I would have thought of that sooner, and so you might but I didn't, and if I missed thinking about it, so might someone else which is why I have written this article. It just shows how important pH levels are. I don't think that it's the alkaline reading itself that is the problem, **it's that the high alkalinity prevents the plant from absorbing all the nutrients that it should, thus causing the leaves to turn yellow.**

From the AVS of
South Australia Newsletter,
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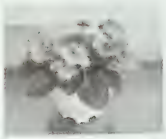

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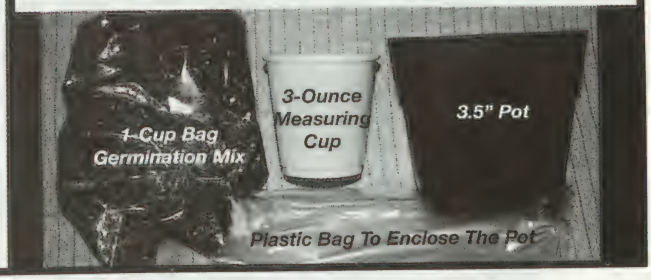

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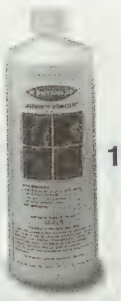

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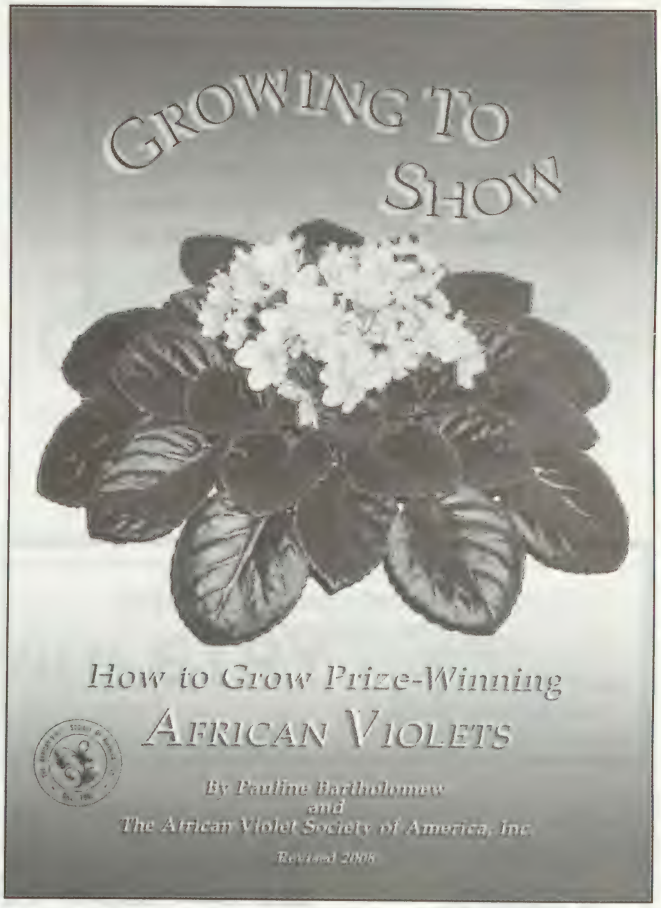

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